

2025 VIRTUAL ORIENTATION LEADER POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

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SECTION A

POSITION DESCRIPTION

OVERVIEW

The Virtual Orientation Leader (VOL) serves as a leader, supporter, and facilitator to first-year students to provide a seamless transition to the UW. As a team, we provide high-quality education, support, and transition resources to over **9,200 first-year students**, including transfer and international students.

As a VOL your primary role will be to support students' transition into the university and lead groups via Zoom during Advising & Orientation Part 2 sessions. VOLs are required to take and earn credit in **General Studies 370: Peer Facilitation Class** in spring quarter, attend all virtual training days, and session dates outlined in [Section B: Timeline and schedule](#).

ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES

Virtual Orientation Leaders will do the following:

- Facilitate engagement, dialogue, and activities with a small group of 15-25 incoming students for each Advising & Orientation session on Zoom. A typical day will include:
 - Managing a small group in your personal Zoom room
 - Guide conversations and facilitate workshops about the UW experience
 - Meet 1:1 with students who need transition support, and use retention strategies to increase engagement (texting, Zoom appointments, email management, social media, etc).
- Support advisers and UW staff in Zoom by hosting the main room/breakout rooms, answering questions, aiding with course registration, and providing customer service for both students and advisers.
- Portray the University of Washington, its policies, services, and campus life in a positive manner to first-year students and families.

- Communicate with students using email, texting with FYP-provided phone number and web-based platform, and social media until the first day of admitted quarter (autumn, winter, or spring).
 - VOLs will use their personal cell phones (masking their phone numbers) to text and call incoming students.
- Promote and encourage engagement in all FYP Programs (Dawg Daze, FIGs, Commuter and Transfer Commons, First Year Networks).
- Other duties as assigned by FYP to support planning and facilitation of A&O and new student transitions. Please note that the VOL role also requires behind the scenes logistics, actions, and projects to support the transition of first year students. In addition to these tracks, expect to do projects that support the overall work of the First Year Programs office.
- See [Section D: Policies and expectations](#) for more details.

REQUIREMENTS

- Be a full-time **undergraduate** (12 credit hours), enrolled **spring quarter 2025 and autumn quarter 2025**, at the University of Washington in Seattle.
- Have a minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA
- Must be able to take General Studies 370: Peer Facilitation Class in spring quarter **Tuesday 2:30-5:20 p.m. in person (updated 1/14/25)**
- Must be able to attend the Virtual Orientation Leader Welcome Night (**March 11, 2025, 5:00-7:00 p.m. in person**)
- Must be able to commit to attending the Summer Training days (**June 23-July 2, no training on weekends or June 27, July 3, or July 4**)
- Review and be able to work the dates of Advising & Orientation Part 2 ([Section C: Summer calendar](#))
- Be in good academic and conduct standing with the University, prior to and throughout the entire term of employment.

- Stable wi-fi connection to support showing video and facilitating an A&O Zoom meeting (recommended 50 Mbps).
- Must be able to host A&O in a distraction free environment that is quiet.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

Employment Term: June 2, 2025, to June 13, 2026* (see Section B: Timeline and Schedule) *updated 4/21/25*

Paychecks will be issued every two weeks (first paycheck will be issued on July 10, 2025).

**VOLs remain on First Year Programs (FYP) payroll through the school year to be able to work during winter and spring admit A&O sessions based on availability.*

FYP-PROVIDED RESOURCES

FYP will provide a **polo uniform** that must be worn during the session.

FYP has access to **laptops, monitors, headphones, and a webcam** if needed to successfully facilitate and work online (must be picked up during spring quarter, FYP will not be able to ship or mail any materials).

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

- You will be paid at a rate of **\$20.76/hour** over the course of your employment via direct deposit.
 - Virtual Orientation Leaders can expect to work at least 35 hours each week. See additional details in [Section C: Summer calendar](#).
 - Leave time (including vacation and sick time) may impact hours worked each week.
- Earn academic credit for General Studies 370: Peer Facilitation Class
- Develop skills in public speaking, time and task management, communication, and interpersonal and professional development
- Make a lasting impact on all incoming students, families, and guests.

WORKING LOCATION

As a Virtual Orientation Leader, you can work in any distraction free environment of your choice.

TIME OFF

Planned time off: Virtual Orientation Leaders may request planned time-off. Planned time-off is unpaid. VOLs are allowed a max of **FOUR** consecutive unpaid vacation days (equivalent to two A&O sessions). All requests during A&O sessions are honored as taking off the entire two-day session. Please submit all requests by **Sunday, June 8 at 11:59 p.m.** Any requests after that date will be considered on a case-by-case basis depending on program needs. See the VOL Vacation policy for more details.

- Round 1 of vacation will be collected during weeks 1 and 2 of spring quarter, we will respond to all vacation requests submitted via email by EOD Friday, April 18.
- Following the spring quarter, additional time-off requests may be submitted until the session is locked down as communicated on the VOL staffing sheet (0.Track Assignments).
 - Sessions are locked down 2 weeks before the session and/or once the maximum number of **ONE** vacation VOLs has been reached.

Unplanned time off: We understand that sickness and emergencies happen. Alert your supervisor and the Associate Director in your Issues Chat as soon as possible and they will work with you to make accommodations. As a student employee you will accrue sick time - sick time can be used as applicable to help supplement pay.

FYP STAFF SUPPORT

Supervisor and Main Point of Contact:

TBD, Program Manager

Program Support:

Courtney Saben, Associate Director

LeAnne Wiles, Executive Director

SECTION B

TIMELINE AND SCHEDULE

During the spring quarter and Summer FYP works in collaboration with Virtual Orientation Leaders to develop the summer staffing schedule. This schedule is created with equity in VOL Track assignments and Vacation/Time Off requests factors in mind. More details about the VOL schedule can be found in [Section C: Summer calendar](#).

WINTER/SPRING 2025 COMMITMENTS

VIRTUAL ORIENTATION LEADER WELCOME NIGHT

Tuesday, March 11, 2025 | 5:00–7:00 p.m.

GENERAL STUDIES 370

March 31–June 6, 2025 | Tuesdays 2:30–5:20pm (edited as of 3/10/25)

- FYP staff will enroll you in GEN ST 370 before the spring quarter begins.
- FYP controls the enrollment for this course so there is no chance it will fill up.
- Class will be in-person throughout the spring quarter.

*This course can also be applied toward a [Leadership minor](#).

SUMMER 2025 AND 2025–2026 ACADEMIC YEAR

SUMMER TRAINING DAYS

June 23–July 2 | No work: June 27, July 3–4

- 7 days total at a virtual location of VOL choice
- Vacation requests may not be submitted for Summer Training.

SUM/AUT ADMIT ADVISING & ORIENTATION PART 2

July 7–August 21

Your VOL daily schedule will vary from week to week depending on which rotation you're assigned to support. All VOLs will have the same total hours per week.

- All VOLs are guaranteed at least 35 hours of work per week
- VOLs will work A&O sessions Monday - Thursday plus 1.5 hours of prep time on Sundays. VOLs will not have responsibilities on Fridays or the weekends.
- The VOL day can start as early as 6:15a.m. and end as late as 5:30 p.m.

HUSKY KICKOFF — IN PERSON

Sunday, September 21

We will need two groups of VOLs:

- Schedule one: 11:00–12:00 (12:00–1:15 p.m. unpaid meal break) 1:15–4:00 p.m. (3.75 hr)
- Schedule two: 12:15–4:00 p.m. (3.75 hr)

While dates/times and the level of your involvement are currently TBD, you will receive confirmation of this information and an opportunity to confirm your ability to attend during spring quarter 2025.

WIN AND SPR ADMIT A&O

December, January, March | Dates and times TBD

- Dates and staffing needs determined closer to the quarter's start date
- Optional sessions throughout the year, VOLs will provide availability to determine staffing.

SECTION C

SUMMER CALENDAR

More details can be found in [Section B: Timeline and schedule.](#)

Week	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
0	6/22 No Program Not Paid	6/23 Summer Training #1	6/24 Summer Training #2	6/25 Summer Training #3	6/26 Summer Training #4	6/27 No Program Not Paid	6/28 No Program Not Paid
0	6/29 No Program Not Paid	6/30 Summer Training #5	7/1 Summer Training #6	7/2 Summer Training #7	7/3 No Program Not Paid	7/4 No Program Not Paid	7/5 No Program Not Paid
1	7/6 Weekly Prep	7/7 Transfer Freshman U.S. (D1)	7/8 Freshman U.S. (D2)	7/9 Freshman U.S. and INTL (D1)	7/10 Freshman U.S. and INTL (D2) Family	7/11 No Program Not Paid	7/12 No Program Not Paid
2	7/13 Weekly Prep	7/14 Transfer Freshman U.S. (D1)	7/15 Freshman U.S. (D2)	7/16 Freshman U.S. and INTL (D1)	7/17 Freshman U.S. and INTL (D2) Family	7/18 No Program Not Paid	7/19 No Program Not Paid
3	7/20 Weekly Prep	7/21 Transfer Freshman U.S. (D1)	7/22 Freshman U.S. (D2)	7/23 Freshman U.S. and INTL (D1)	7/24 Freshman U.S. and INTL (D2) Family	7/25 No Program Not Paid	7/26 No Program Not Paid
4	7/27 Weekly Prep	7/28 Transfer Freshman U.S. (D1)	7/29 Freshman U.S. (D2)	7/30 Freshman U.S. and INTL (D1)	7/31 Freshman U.S. and INTL (D2) Family	8/1 No Program Not Paid	8/2 No Program Not Paid
5	8/3 Weekly Prep	8/4 Transfer Freshman U.S. (D1)	8/5 Freshman U.S. (D2)	8/6 Freshman U.S. and INTL (D1)	8/7 Freshman U.S. and INTL (D2) Family	8/8 No Program Not Paid	8/9 No Program Not Paid
6	8/10 Weekly Prep	8/11 Transfer Freshman U.S. (D1)	8/12 Freshman U.S. (D2)	8/13 Freshman U.S. and INTL (D1)	8/14 Freshman U.S. and INTL (D2) Family	8/15 No Program Not Paid	8/16 No Program Not Paid
7	8/17 Weekly Prep	8/18 Transfer Freshman U.S. (D1)	8/19 Freshman U.S. (D2)	8/20 Freshman U.S. and INTL (D1)	8/21 Freshman U.S. and INTL (D2) Family	8/22 No Program Not Paid	8/23 No Program Not Paid
	9/21 Husky Kickoff	9/22 No Program Not Paid	9/23 No Program Not Paid	9/24 No Program Not Paid	9/25 No Program Not Paid	9/26 No Program Not Paid	9/27 No Program Not Paid

SECTION D

POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

FYP has policies and expectations that Virtual Orientation Leaders are expected to follow. Please review these policies and expectations as well as the [University Policies](#). See [Section E: Support and accountability](#) for further details about how we work with VOLs that may not meet these expectations.

1. Academic Success

- 1.1. Actively engage in class, ask questions, and participate in discussions and activities.
- 1.2. Earn credit for GEN ST 370.
- 1.3. Utilize what you learn in the classroom to inform decision making. Utilize professional staff, student coordinators/assistants, and class syllabus to navigate unclear situations.

2. General Conduct and Team Communication

- 2.1. Communicate with FYP staff, other campus offices, and your students in an honest and timely manner.
- 2.2. The FYP staff is here to help you make decisions and navigate issues. Keep FYP informed of all issues that impact your work so we can help you.
- 2.3. Immediately notify your supervisor if you are missing work due to illness or emergency. If running late or have a last-minute change in schedule, communicate via phone or Microsoft Teams.
- 2.4. Check Microsoft Teams and email regularly for updates and information pertinent to the role.
- 2.5. As a representative of the University, you are expected to abide by the [UW Student Conduct Code](#) and laws of the State of Washington.
- 2.6. Before and during Virtual Orientation Leader related work, you will not consume or be under the influence of alcohol, cannabis, or any type of illegal substance.
 - 2.6.1.1. Virtual orientation leaders Over 21 will not purchase or supply alcohol or cannabis for persons under 21.
 - 2.6.1.2. Virtual orientation leaders Under 21 will not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or cannabis at any time.
- 2.7. Ensure your public online identity and conduct is aligned with these expectations. Using personal social media accounts and telephone numbers to communicate with students within the context of this role is permitted, but Virtual Orientation Leaders must be conscious of personal boundaries and accounts you'd like to keep private.
- 2.8. Return any checked out technology equipment to FYP by the assigned due date. Any items or technology keys checked out from Student Tech Fee, FYP, or Academic Technologies must be returned by the end of the quarter. Failure to do so will result in being fined a fee to replace the item.
- 2.9. VOLs are strictly prohibited from entering into sexual or romantic relationships with program participants.
- 2.10. FYP encourages your feedback and discourse on ways **we can continue to improve throughout the term of your position**. We ask that you communicate any ideas or feedback with an FYP professional staff member directly via the following methods: scheduling a time to meet in-person or via video-chat, sending a text message or direct message on Microsoft Teams, calling the phone during business hours, or a set process as identified by program staff. If you would prefer to provide anonymous feedback to FYP, we encourage you to use the [form located on our website](#).

3. Position Responsibilities and Logistics

- 3.1. Always prepare for your VOL role and model full engagement and participation in all VOL training and A&O programs and sessions.
 - 3.1.1. In a virtual space on Zoom or MS Teams, VOLs are expected to have their camera on and ready to engage with presenters, FYP Professional Staff, and Student Coordinators.
- 3.2. Your primary role as a VOL is to develop a community among your students and provide transition support. While this development will take time, you are expected to commit yourself to this goal throughout your position and make connections with students assigned to your cohort, learn their names, and build an environment that will support their transition.
- 3.3. Incorporate your story and experience into the sessions you facilitate. This position will require you to reflect on your failures and successes, on the resources you used (or should have used), and the support you received as a UW student so that your students can learn from your experience. Engage students in experiences that highlight stories, backgrounds, and identities that may be different from their own and that may inspire students to partake in experiences they would not have been aware of otherwise.
- 3.4. With guidance from FYP staff, VOLs are expected to adapt their prepared modules (presentations, activities, and interactions) to meet the individual needs of your students.
- 3.5. Create a welcoming environment for all students by using inclusive language and making decisions that appropriately weigh your role as a peer and an authority figure.
- 3.6. Promptly confront behavior that harms the community. Be an advocate for students who experience discrimination, bullying, or harassment by notifying FYP of students who need support.
- 3.7. Be consistent in your confrontation of issues. Any exceptions you make for one student as a peer you must be willing to make for all.
- 3.8. Educate students about University Policies, specifically Policies that concern the safety, security, academic success and personal development of all UW students.
- 3.9. Understand that diversity is a core value of the University. The University and those within it must actively work to create and maintain learning, working, living, and healthcare spaces in which students, faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds believe they can thrive. VOLs must continually assess their own learning and understanding to model respectful behavior across differences.
- 3.10. Recruitment for any specific student organization is not allowed, nor is communication of negative attitudes, feelings, or degrading stories about individual members, organizations or types of organizations. This includes all fraternity and sorority members in IFC, PHC, NPHC, and UGC.
 - 3.10.1. VOLs that are members of the Greek community are prohibited from recruiting for your chapter while working as a Virtual Orientation Leader.
 - 3.10.2. VOLs that are members of the Greek community are permitted to share their individual affiliation (verbally, decorations, jewelry, etc.) in a general context if it doesn't cross the line into recruitment. If you are worried about that boundary you are encouraged to NOT share your direct affiliation.
- 3.11. Virtual Orientation Leaders will be provided with a uniform and are required to wear it throughout the program and additional events. VOLs are responsible for keeping their uniform clean and professional.

4. Confidentiality and Safety

- 4.1. You are required to keep FYP informed of any information that you learn as part of the Virtual Orientation Leader role, especially if the health or safety of any individual is at risk. All information shared with FYP will be kept private, but due to mandatory reporting laws and [University Policy](#), we may be required to report that information to the appropriate authorities.

- 4.2. All student information that you have access to through your Virtual Orientation Leader role must be handled in line with [FERPA Policies](#).

5. Team Dynamics

- 5.1. The VOL role can be challenging in a remote environment given the amount of time spent on camera engaging with students, faculty, and staff virtually. FYP will support you and help you identify strategies to find balance in the VOL role. You are expected to identify the strategies that will best serve you and implement them individually. If you need additional support or ideas, we encourage you to connect with an FYP professional staff member.
- 5.2. Conflicts with incoming students should try to be resolved with direct communication in a reasonable and timely way. If you have challenges navigating conflicts with students, we expect you to ask for support from FYP professional staff in your A&O Issues Chat on MS Teams.
- 5.3. Conflicts with team members will likely arise throughout the summer for a variety of reasons. We expect you to attempt to resolve conflict with your peers first by communicating directly with them within a reasonable amount of time. If you are unable to resolve the issue interpersonally, we expect you to ask for support from your supervisor in helping to find a resolution. You can communicate with your supervisor via the following methods: scheduling a time to meet in-person or via video-chat, sending a text message or direct message on Microsoft Teams, or calling on the phone during business hours.
- 5.4. Be aware of how others on the team are being treated, acknowledge how your behavior impacts the team, and consider **your role** in fostering a positive work environment.

6. First-year Student Transition Support, First-year Engagement Programming, and Dawg Daze

- 6.1. Student Transition Support: All VOLs will be responsible for communicating with the students on their Connection Group rosters via our texting platform, Mongoose Cadence. FYP will provide access, training, and support for managing Mongoose including a timeline of pre-scheduled messages.
- 6.2. Students are also asked on a survey if they'd like to receive follow-up support, and if they select yes, VOLs will be responsible for following up with those students and providing information, resources, and referrals throughout the summer.
 - 6.2.1. Time will be scheduled during A&O session days for VOLs to respond to and send messages to students on their rosters. VOLs are not expected to respond to these messages after scheduled A&O session hours.
 - 6.2.2. VOLs will have 1.5 hours of paid time on Sundays after 6:00 p.m. to create and schedule messages for the coming week and prepare for the program.
- 6.3. First-year Engagement Programming: With deciding to continue to facilitate Advising & Orientation sessions virtually, we want to also provide students opportunities to connect to the UW campus prior to the start of their autumn quarter.
 - 6.3.1. VOLs will be required to attend Husky Kickoff during Dawg Daze to support FYP's largest key event for new students. More details will be shared during Training Days.
 - 6.3.2. VOLs may also choose to apply as a general Dawg Daze volunteer for all other Dawg Daze events.

SECTION E

SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Supporting each other is critical to our ability to effectively operate as a team. While it is expected that each VOL holds themselves accountable to the Virtual Orientation Leader expectations, we understand that this may not always happen consistently. Below are a few approaches to how we support each other in FYP as we hold VOLs and all FYP staff to a high standard.

Conversation with FYP professional staff

- FYP considers every situation to be unique with its own context and background.
- Professional staff will always meet with you in an effort to understand your perspective.

Written documentation

- FYP staff will always document these conversations in a confidential email to you outlining what you discussed and any agreements or next steps.
- Please respond to this email with any information that may have been missed or with follow up questions.

Action plan

- As part of your conversation with FYP professional staff, you may agree to put together a written action plan that outlines the steps you and FYP will take to help improve your performance.
- This plan is flexible and meant to help make you a stronger leader, so please take an active role in creating this plan.

Dismissal from the Virtual Orientation Leader role

- The decision to be dismissed from the Virtual Orientation Leader role usually comes from the Virtual Orientation Leaders themselves as they realize that they cannot fulfill the expectations of the role. Please inform FYP immediately of any situations that would cause you to consider this.
- At times, this decision is made by both the Virtual Orientation Leader and FYP through a series of conversations and/or action plans.
- Serious situations may put FYP in a position to make the decision to dismiss the Virtual Orientation Leader from the role. In this case, FYP will always meet with the Virtual Orientation Leader and provide written documentation.

SECTION F

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing below, I agree to the conditions as outlined by the **2025 Virtual Orientation Leader Guidelines and Expectations** and acknowledge my understanding of specific policies.

I accept the position of Virtual Orientation Leader as outlined by the Office of First Year Programs at the University of Washington. Moreover, I understand that any behaviors or actions that are not in line with these employment terms, guidelines and expectations may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, a formal apology, probation, or termination of employment.

PRINTED NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

This page will be signed and turned in during the Virtual Orientation Leader Welcome Event on Wednesday, March 11, 2025.

SECTION G

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **What qualities or abilities do you look for in Virtual Orientation Leader candidates?**

There is no single set of characteristics that make up an ideal Virtual Orientation Leader. Instead, our goal is to have our Virtual Orientation Leader staff represent the diversity of the UW community. It is also a priority for us to select students who are committed to supporting all entering students and their families, and who can effectively share relevant UW resources with new students.

2. **Can I be a Resident Adviser and a Virtual Orientation Leader at the same time?**

We are happy to work with first-time or returning RA's to accommodate employment in our office and the housing office.

3. **Are Virtual Orientation Leaders hired just for the summer, or do they work during the school year as well?**

Though most of the work occurs during the summer, Virtual Orientation Leaders remain on FYP payroll through the school year to be able to work during winter and spring admit A&O sessions based on availability.

4. **Are Virtual Orientation Leaders paid for their training in the GEN ST 370 course?**

The spring quarter course and summer breaks compose the non-paid components of the VOL role. Nonetheless, Virtual Orientation Leaders will receive 1-3 credits towards their general education requirements.

5. **Can I take summer classes and/or have a second job while being a Virtual Orientation Leader?**

VOLs will work A&O sessions Monday - Thursday plus 1.5 hours on Sundays. VOLs will not have responsibilities on Fridays or the weekends. The VOL day can start as early as 6:15 a.m. and end as late as 5:30 p.m. Due to the time commitment involved with being a Virtual Orientation Leader and energy required running a successful advising and orientation program, we advise summer staff to refrain from enrolling in classes or committing to other jobs outside of our office.

6. **During the summer, what's the typical workload for a Virtual Orientation Leader?**

Virtual orientation leaders are guaranteed 35 hours a week during summer. Start and end times may vary from 6:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. depending on program needs.

7. **Can I request planned time off or vacation time?**

Yes, Virtual Orientation Leaders may request time-off. Requests for planned time-off are unpaid and will be considered following the [Vacation Policy](#). VOLs are allowed a max of four consecutive unpaid vacation days (equivalent to two A&O sessions, or 1 week).

Please note that since Summer Training Days are vital to understanding the facilitation techniques and logistics of the advising and orientation process, vacation requests cannot be submitted for these days. View dates in [Section C: Summer calendar](#).