Panther Excellence Program (PEP) FAQ

Q: What is Panther Excellence Program?
A: PEP is designed to help students transition from high school to college by providing individual guidance and coordinated support. The program not only includes additional academic assistance, but also specific co-curricular programs and activities to further enhance your success at Georgia State University.

Q: Why was I selected to participate in PEP?
A: Students were selected to participate in PEP based on their Freshman Index score, which is the calculation Georgia State uses to determine admissions to the school. The Freshman Index is based on a combination of SAT/ACT scores and high school GPA in college prep courses.

Q: Is Panther Excellence Program a remedial program?
A: No. Georgia State University does not offer remedial programs. The courses you will take are regular courses.

Q: How do I accept the invitation to participate in the Panther Excellence Program?
A: It is a one-step process. Go to http://success.students.gsu.edu/first-year-programs/panther-excellence/pep-intent-to-enroll/ and complete the Intent to Enroll form. Completing the form will not only confirm your participation in PEP, but will also indicate that you will attend Georgia State University.

Q: Where is the Commitment Statement to participate in the Panther Excellence Program?
A: The Commitment Statement will be available for you to sign during Incept. It will basically state that you understand that the program you are joining lasts for two semesters (fall 2015 and spring 2016) and that you will participate for the duration of the program.

Q: What if I have not completed my FAFSA? Will my application still be reviewed if I have not applied for this current year?
A: Your application will still be considered; however, you will need to complete the free FAFSA as soon as possible. Not doing so means that you would not be eligible for financial aid during the fall semester.

Q: How do I apply for Housing?
A: Once you identify that you will participate in PEP, you will be issued a campus ID and Panther ID. (Your campus ID will be the first letter of your first name, your last name, and a number. Your Panther ID will be a nine digits number.) As soon as you receive both IDs, you will be able to apply for housing.

Q: What classes will I be taking in the fall?
A: For fall, you will take the following courses:
- GSU 1010 New Student Orientation—This course is required for everyone in this program. The class is not part of the Core Curriculum, but it counts in the institutional and HOPE GPA. We have research that shows that students who actively participate in this course graduate faster, retain the HOPE scholarship at a higher rate, and have higher GPAs over their college career.
This is the course that will provide us with the opportunity to assist you in developing solid academic skills and to aid in your college transition. We have dedicated resources for this class to provide study skills and learning styles assessments for students, as well as hired a peer mentor to be in the class to help you with your transition.

- Engl 1101 English Composition I—Required course for all students.
- Other courses in the Core Curriculum that counts towards graduation for all majors.

Q: Are classes from Monday to Friday?
A: The class schedules vary, but students have class from Monday to Thursday. Fridays will be used as opportunities for study skills workshops, tutors and other academic support. We will also have guest speakers from the community and across campus that will be scheduled during the time the students are here.

Q: Can I select my own classes?
A: Not for fall. The Panther Excellence Program aims not only to provide you with successful skills to help you do well at Georgia State, but also to form a small, friendly community within a large, research university. If you do not take the same courses as everyone else, you would not be fully integrated in the PEP community. You will have the opportunity, however, to select certain courses for spring semester.

Q: Do I have to live on campus?
A: We encourage students to live on campus because many events and activities are held on campus; therefore, living in student housing allows you to attend these easily. Another reason to live on campus is that Residential Advisors will be on your floor to assist you from transitioning to living on your own to organizing activities to help you discover Atlanta. Finally, studies have shown that students who live on campus tend to stay in school and graduate at higher rates. Since we want to make sure you succeed at Georgia State, living on campus is a good place to start.

Q: Will I have time for a part-time job?
A: Potentially. You could work in the evenings or on the weekends because we don’t intend to schedule too many required events then. If you are living on campus, there will be evening programs that you can attend to enhance your experience.

Q: Are there any work/study opportunities at this time?
A: This would depend on your financial aid award. Once you receive your award, you will know whether you are eligible for work-study. If this is something that you need in order to attend Georgia State, we are going to have the Office of Financial Aid talk to the PEP students and you would have an opportunity to talk with them about your specific situation.

Q: I already signed up for INCEPT; should I still attend?
A: We are currently planning a different orientation for PEP students on August 4, 2015, so we want to make sure that you attend that particular date.

Other questions should be directed to pantherexcellence@gsu.edu.