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## Perceived Gains of Peer Educators in Campus Learning Centers: Academic Performance and Learning, Non-Academic Skillsets, and Self-Confidence and Fulfillment

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# **Perceived Gains of Peer Educators in Campus Learning Centers: Academic Performance and Learning, Non-Academic Skillsets, and Self-Confidence and Fulfillment**

**Rebecca Cofer, Juliann Sergi McBrayer, Cordelia Zinskie, Pamela Wells, and Katherine Fallon**

## **Abstract**

This study explored the peer tutor and Supplemental Instruction (SI) Leader experiences in campus learning centers as seen through the perceived gains in three subcategories: 1) academic performance and learning, 2) non-academic skillsets, and 3) self-confidence and fulfillment. The peer tutors and SI Leaders surveyed in this study had experience in one or both of these roles and came from institutions across the nation and from several international institutions. In this quantitative study, participants completed a researcher-created survey. The major findings showed a significant difference in the peer educators' perceived gains based on their roles, with tutors reporting greater perceived gains. Additionally, the study found that these peer educators perceived the most gains in non-academic skillsets, specifically related to increases in their communication and listening skills as well as skills for future careers. When examining the perceived gains in relation to the role and the length of time in that role, the peer tutor role was found to be significant in all three subcategories, whereas the length of time in that role did not present significant differences. Implications for practice support the need for increased resource allocation, showing that learning centers impact more than the students the peer educators serve.

## **Introduction**

Peer support has been utilized as a method to increase student retention, persistence, and graduation rates, regardless of the institution type, size, or location, and it has been found to be among the top influencers of college students, as was found by seminal scholars (Astin, 1993; Kuh 1995). Lundberg and Sheridan (2015) found college students' health behaviors, personal perceptions, learning, and graduation rates are related to the peers with whom they come in contact while at college. In an effort to increase retention, persistence, and graduation rates, institutions of higher education have implemented peer education programs.

Peer tutoring was defined by Falchikov (2001) as involving two parties, the tutor and the person being tutored. The National Survey on Peer Educators revealed growth in several dimensions for the peer educator, like knowledge acquisition, intrapersonal development, and campus connection (Wawrzynski et al., 2011). One of these peer educator programs was a SI program created to increase success in historically challenging classes (Malm et al., 2012). Whereas

traditional interventions identified high-risk students for services, an alternative approach identified high-risk courses and offered support to all students enrolled in the class using an SI Leader (Martin & Blanc, 1981).

As defined by Sanford (2020), learning centers in higher education have “enormous individual variation,” something the current study recognizes. Learning centers can encompass various elements including a writing center, a Supplemental Instruction program, language learning centers, and mathematics programs, to name a few; they may include some or all of these elements. Regardless of what they look like or which programs they house, “they are where students go to do the work of being a student—to study, to write papers, to do homework, to prepare for exams, to review their notes—and to do so in the presence of other students... and among tutors who can offer support as needed” (Sanford, 2020). The current study examined the subcategories of gains for the tutor and SI Leader experiences in higher education.

### **Review of the Literature**

One of the biggest influences on college students is their peers because peers influence everything from college choice to learning to personal development (Astin, 1993; Kuh, 1995). While there is literature to support the argument that these two peer education support roles serve as equally valuable tools for course persistence of the tutee and session attendee, there is not the same degree of empirical research on how the experience may relate to the retention of those peer educators, along with their perceived academic and skillset gains with the outcome of graduation.

### **Student engagement and persistence**

Engagement in higher education is defined as activities students partake in that are linked to desired educational outcomes of an institution (Kuh, 2009). Additionally, engagement includes the activities students participate in outside of the classroom, and these educationally purposeful activities such as campus jobs are connected to increased persistence, retention, and graduation rates (Kuh et al., 2010). Campus employment can include internships, work study opportunities, on-campus job experiences, and peer educators serving in a campus learning center. Martinez et al. (2012) explored this relationship between employment and persistence in low-income, first-generation college students and found that in addition to contributing to the grade point average and persistence of students, on-campus employment was also found to impact professional attitudes of the students who were employed.

Peer educators are students who can relate to what other students are experiencing and, as such, are cost-effective tools for persistence and retention. Newton and Ender (2010) explored the concept of the peer educator arguing, “they are experienced with the campus, they are economical to the budget, they can relate to the situations of fellow students, and they are effective” (p. 3). Skipper and Keup (2017) argued these roles go beyond that of peer educator as the role of a peer leader should be elevated based on the power of the peer influence in higher education; they argued that understanding the effects of this experience for these peer leaders was “relatively underdeveloped” (p. 96).

**Academic performance and learning**

The first subcategory of academic gains related to the peer educator experience is academic performance and learning. Academic performance and learning are discussed in multiple ways, including metacognitive skill increases, content knowledge increases, awareness of learning styles, and scores on assessment (Arco-Tirado et al., 2011; DeBacker et al., 2012; Lockie & Van Lanen, 2008; Malm et al., 2012). Researchers have approached the topic of tutor benefits from a generalized teaching and learning perspective and found that the work allowed the peer educators to reflect on and assess learning and that learning was enhanced by the educators teaching others (Fiorella & Mayer, 2013; Unger et al., 2014). The National Survey of Peer Leaders (2013) noted that 40% of the participants reported increases in academic skill development. Hoiland et al. (2020) argued that the SI Leader experience is a tool that increases the growth mindset of participants, still another dimension of academic performance and learning (Sneddon, 2015). Additional research explored academic gains from a post-graduation perspective of skills student leaders learned that could be applied to their current careers; they noted these leaders found a deeper understanding of content, as well (Lozada & Johnson, 2018; Malm et al., 2012).

**Non-academic skillset gains**

Non-academic skills can be defined as development in such areas as leadership, interpersonal relationships, and personal development. Garcia (2014) included critical thinking, problem solving, social skills, emotional health, work ethic, and community responsibility as non-academic skills. The body of research on the peer tutor and SI Leader non-academic benefits includes most of these gains, with peer tutor gains being more represented in the literature than those associated with the SI Leader experience (Bouthillette, 2016; Dvorak, 2001; Unger et al., 2014).

An early study about the peer tutor experience found gains related to increases in managing conflict and nonverbal communication (Mann, 1994). The National Survey of Peer Leaders (2013) measured these non-academic skill gains in areas like time management and organization, and the largest reported increases in these skills were for leadership and interpersonal communication. Unger et al. (2014) examined the experience of the peer tutor, and although the tutor participants noted an increase in learning perspectives and communication skills, they seemed to misunderstand the impact that the tutoring experience had on their listening, helping, and social skills. Additionally, Seo and Kim (2019) found statistically significant increases in communication and collaborative skills for peer tutors. Furthermore, offering the perspective of a diverse SI program, Moorehead (2021) noted gains like organization and communication skills.

**Self-confidence and fulfillment**

Serving in a peer educator role requires skills that often lead to increased levels of self-confidence and fulfillment for tutors and SI Leaders. Stout and McDaniel (2006) categorized the sorts of effects as “enhanced personal development” (p. 58). Referring specifically to the SI Leader experience, they explained the value of the role, saying, “Student recognition of their growing leadership role promoted positive personal development, increased self-confidence, and enhanced self-esteem” (p. 58). Peer tutors’ unique job in learning centers allows

them to have a specific role on campus, and many peer tutors note the sense of fulfillment and increased self-confidence that they found because of the job. DeFeo and Caparas (2014), Dvorak (2001), and Sneddon (2015) all found that tutors reported feelings of fulfillment from their work in learning centers as they transformed into their roles as tutors. Clarke et al. (2015) focused on the tutors' confidence and preparation for teaching because of the experience, and tutors noted a sense of community because of their participation in the program. Abbot et al. (2018) examined the benefits of tutoring in terms of these same feelings of fulfillment.

### **Methodology**

The research design used for this study was a quantitative survey. Based on findings from a review of the literature, a researcher-generated instrument was created, which explored the perceived gains of peer educators across three subcategories, including academic performance and learning, non-cognitive skills, and self-confidence and fulfillment. As argued by Nardi (2018), surveys are not ideal for all research, but based on the proposed sample and the research questions, a self-administered survey of peer educators was determined to be the most effective way to gather data for this study.

### **Context**

The context of the study varied by the participants, who came from across the nation and from several institutions globally. Although there was not a consistent context for the study, the center and institution demographics did provide information on the types of institutions participants came from, which included two-year universities, four-year universities, and community colleges or technical schools.

### **Participants**

The participants in this study were students who were employed or who had served as a peer tutor and/or SI Leader within the last year at their respective institution's learning center. A total of 1,217 peer educators participated in this survey. Participants varied in age, major, ethnicity, and other demographics. Additionally, the study sought only participants who had served in the peer educator role for at least one semester or quarter prior to the survey date and who served at colleges, universities, community colleges, and technical schools. Although it was not possible to determine the number of institutions whose peer educators participated in the survey, there were respondents from several types of institutions and centers.

The largest percentage of participants identified as current or former peer tutors (47.6%) while the smallest percentage served as SI Leaders only (25.5%). The largest percentage indicated they had been serving in their role for one semester (23.6%). Related to their demographics, the largest percentage of participants identified as white (68.8%), female (55.9%), and seniors (32.0%).

Table 1  
*Respondents' peer educating experience*

Experience Item	<i>n</i>	Percentage
<b>Role</b>		
Peer tutor	579	47.6
SI Leader	310	25.5
Both tutor and SI Leader	328	27.0
<b>Length of time</b>		
1 semester	287	23.6
1 year	267	21.9
2 years	268	22.0
3 years	204	16.8
4+ years	191	15.7

*n* = 1,217

### **Instrument and data collection**

After exploring the literature on the peer tutor experience, a survey was created by the researcher in a prior study (Cofer, 2020) based on reflected subcategories of gains in the literature. The items fall into one of three categories of gains including 1) academic performance and learning, 2) non-academic gains, and 3) self-confidence and fulfillment. The researcher-created Peer Educator Experiences Survey contained two parts. The first part included statements that require a Likert scale response, and the second part included demographic questions and sought participants' background. The data gained from these demographic items were used to understand the participant sample and peer educator backgrounds. This instrument presents 12 items in Part 1 requiring a Likert scale response, with 1 being "strongly disagree," 2 being "disagree," 3 being "neither agree nor disagree," 4 being "agree," and 5 being "strongly agree." The mean was calculated for each category of the 12 Likert scale items and also for all the items. The researcher sought participants using public listservs and recruited both peer tutors and SI Leaders globally through these platforms. The survey was administered via an anonymous link through Qualtrics.

### **Results**

The primary research question for this study was

1. To what degree do students serving or having served as peer educators in the campus learning center perceive gains in their academic performance and/or learning, in their non-academic skillsets, and in their self-confidence and fulfillment?

The secondary research questions were

2. How does length of experience serving or having served as a peer educator relate to perceived gains of those peer educators?
3. How does the type of peer educator role (peer tutor, SI Leader, or both) in the campus learning center relate to their perceived gains?

Research question 1 was analyzed by conducting descriptive analyses of means and standard deviations of the instrument's subcategory scores. These

statistics provide an overview of the experienced gains for the sample of peer educators. To analyze research questions 2 and 3 about the relationship between perceived gains and the number of years serving as a peer educator or the type of role (peer tutor or SI Leader), one-way ANOVA analyses were run for role and time served in the role variables per the three subcategories in the instrument. Questions 2, 8, and 9 pertain to the academic performance and learning subcategory. Questions 1, 5, and 11 are related to the self-confidence and fulfillment subcategory. Questions 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, and 12 pertain to the non-academic skillset subcategory. Table 2 presents the results of the Likert-scaled 12 items in the first part of the instrument.

Table 2  
*Percentages for items 1 to 12 in part 1*

Survey Item	SD	D	N	A	SA
Q1 Serving as a peer educator increases/increased my self-confidence.	11.8%	10.0%	12.1%	33.9%	32.2%
Q2 Serving as a peer educator improves/improved my academic performance.	10.8	10.4	23.3	29.0	26.5
Q3 Serving as a peer educator improves/improved my communication and listening skills.	10.8	10.4	12.2	29.2	37.4
Q4 Serving as a peer educator improves/improved my own time management skills.	8.5	14.6	21.2	27.4	28.3
Q5 Peer educating gives/gave me feelings of fulfillment and accomplishment.	11.4	10.4	15.1	29.1	34.0
Q6 I develop/developed a better sense of responsibility through my peer educator position.	9.9	11.6	18.9	29.6	30.0
Q7 Being a peer educator allows/allowed me to develop more patience.	9.0	11.7	20.0	31.8	27.4
Q8 Being a peer educator helps/helped me be more aware of the learning process for myself.	11.1	9.9	19.0	30.0	30.0
Q9 Being a peer educator helps/helped me be more aware of the learning process for my tutees/SI attendees.	11.2	11.1	14.2	32.5	31.0
Q10 My experience as a peer educator helps/helped me develop social skills.	11.1	12.5	18.6	26.8	31.1
Q11 Being a peer educator makes/made me feel more connected to my institution.	12.7	16.0	19.6	26.8	24.9
Q12 I believe that the skills I gain/gained being a peer educator will benefit my future professional life.	10.8	9.1	22.4	22.4	44.6

$n = 1,217$ . SD = strongly disagree; D = disagree; N = neither agree nor disagree; A = agree; SA = strongly agree.

In the first subcategory of gains, academic performance and learning, the item that received the highest percentage of “strongly agree” scores (31.0%) was the peer educators’ awareness of their tutees’ and/or SI attendees’ learning process. An additional 32.5% of respondents agreed with this item. Of the three items in this subcategory, the question related to peer educators’ awareness of their own learning process received the smallest amount of “disagree” or “strongly disagree” responses. Of the 1,217 responses, 9.9% ( $n = 121$ ) disagreed with the statement about their awareness of the learning process for themselves. It is important to note that peer educators, tutors, and SI Leaders are, for the purposes of this study, valued equally for their role in supporting academic performance and learning, non-academic skillsets, and self-confidence and fulfillment.

In the self-confidence and fulfillment subcategory of gains, the results from this study revealed that peer educators most strongly agreed that the skills they gained as a peer educator will be used in their professional life (44.6%) followed by their increased communication and listening skills (37.4%). The items with the greatest amount of “strongly disagree” responses included the peer educators feeling more connected to their institution (12.7%) and increases in self-confidence (11.8%).

Items from the academic performance and learning and non-academic skillsets categories had the highest mean scores. The largest percentage of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with items about non-academic skills gained for their future professional life (67.0%), their awareness of their tutees’/SI attendees’ learning process (63.5%), and their awareness of their own learning process (60.0%). Descriptive statistics were calculated for the perceived gains by subcategory and overall gains. Table 3 provides the descriptive statistics by subcategory of perceived gains.

Table 3  
*Summary of descriptive statistics by category*

	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Academic performance and learning	1.00	5.00	3.56	.92
Self-confidence and fulfillment	1.00	5.00	3.54	.97
Non-academic skillsets	1.00	5.00	3.62	.82

$n = 1,217$

Of the three subcategories of gains, the non-academic skillsets had the highest mean score ( $M = 3.62$ ), and the self-confidence and fulfillment items had the lowest mean score ( $M = 3.54$ ) with also the highest variability ( $SD = .97$ ).

To answer the study’s two sub-questions regarding the relationship between perceived gains and the type of peer educator role and the length of time served in that role, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were performed for each of the subcategories and also for each of the two independent variables, type of role and length of time in that role. The findings from this study showed statistically significant differences in perceived gains by the role in which the peer educator served (peer tutor, SI Leader, or both) for each of the three subcategories of gains. If Levene’s homogeneity of variance assumption was not met for a one-way ANOVA, the Welch’s  $F$  test statistics

and subsequent Games-Howell post hoc analyses are reported. Regarding the one-way ANOVAs run for the type of role variable, there was a significant difference in the academic performance and learning score: ( $F(2, 668.92) = 16.90, p \leq .001$ ).

Post hoc comparisons using the Games-Howell procedure were then conducted and found the mean scores of peer tutors ( $M = 3.72, SD = .88$ ) in this subcategory differed significantly from those of both SI Leaders ( $M = 3.43, SD = .98$ ) and also from those that served in both roles ( $M = 3.41, SD = .95$ ).

For the non-academic skills subcategory of gains, results varied. Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was met ( $F(2, 1214) = .786, p = .456$ ) and a one-way ANOVA found a statistically significant difference in the subcategory mean scores of skillset gains based on type of role ( $F(2, 1214) = 32.60, p \leq .001$ ). Post hoc comparisons were then completed using the Scheffe procedure to determine which pairs of the roles differed significantly in their mean scores. Again, these analyses revealed that peer tutors' scores ( $M = 3.82, SD = .78$ ) were significantly different from both the SI Leaders' scores ( $M = 3.48, SD = .82$ ) and also from those with experience in both roles ( $M = 3.42, SD = .82$ ).

For the confidence and fulfillment subcategory of gains, similar results were found as in the academic performance and learning subcategory. The Welch's  $F$  ratio was obtained ( $F(2, 658.50) = 19.02, p \leq .001$ ), which indicated a significant difference among the perceived gains' scores in this subcategory based on type of peer educator role. Post hoc comparisons were conducted using the Games-Howell procedure and found that peer tutors' self-confidence and fulfillment mean scores ( $M = 3.72, SD = .90$ ) were significantly different from those who served as SI Leaders ( $M = 3.38, SD = .99$ ) or in both roles ( $M = 3.39, SD = 1.01$ ).

For the academic performance and learning subcategory, a Welch's  $F$  statistic revealed no statistically significant difference ( $F(4, 573.68) = .58, p = .68$ ). For the subcategory of self-confidence and fulfillment, a review of Welch's  $F$  statistic also found no statistical significance in the difference of the scores for the self-confidence and fulfillment subcategory. For the final subcategory of gains, the non-academic skillsets, Levene's  $F$  test showed that homogeneity of variance was met ( $F(4, 1212) = 1.58, p = .18$ ). As such, Welch's  $F$  statistic did not need to be utilized. The one-way ANOVA for this subcategory also did not reveal a statistically significant difference in the mean scores ( $F(4, 1212) = 4.20, p = .19$ ).

### Discussion

Results from this study support previous studies that found the experience of serving as either a peer tutor or an SI Leader was related to gains in the areas of academic performance and learning, non-academic skills, and self-confidence and fulfillment (Cofer, 2020; DeBacker et al., 2012; DeFeo & Caparas, 2014; Hoiland et al., 2020; Lockie & Van Lanen, 2008; Lozada & Johnson, 2019; Malm et al., 2012; Moorehead, 2021; Stout & McDaniel, 2006; Unger et al., 2014). For example, findings related to those items in the academic performance and learning subcategory were similar to those from Fiorella and Mayer (2013) and Unger et al. (2014), as both studies found that the experience of serving as a peer tutor allowed those tutors to enhance their learning.

This study's instrument asked respondents to rate their agreement about how the experience made them more aware of their own and their tutees' or SI attendees' learning, a finding noted in previous studies (Lockie & Van Lanen, 2008; Malm et al., 2012). Participants most strongly agreed with the statement about understanding the learning process of the students they served, as was indicated by the number of "strongly agree" responses for this item. This finding connects directly to the results of DeBacker et al. (2015), who found that tutors employed in a reciprocal peer tutoring program engaged in metacognitive regulation, or the action by which we think about learning and then act on those thoughts for regulation, as was the case with the peer educators' considering their students' learning.

Although not to the extent as with the other subcategories, this study also confirmed previous research related to gains in the self-confidence and fulfillment subcategory. Several studies, both qualitative and quantitative in methodology, found that tutors' and SI Leaders' experience increased self-confidence, both in the long term and also immediately following their sessions (Mann, 1994; Nomura et al., 2017). Additionally, peer tutors and SI Leaders were aware of the non-academic gains from their experience, as well—something previous studies also found in excess (Lozada & Johnson, 2018).

The item in the instrument that elicited the most "strongly agree" responses was the application of skills gained in their future professions. An examination of these skills in the post-graduation lens was a common analysis for the SI Leader research, as other studies found high levels of transferability of specific non-academic skills for the participants including communication and interpersonal skills (Lozada & Johnson, 2018).

These non-academic skills varied across studies but included skills in collaboration, speaking, teaching, communication, and even online facilitation (Arco-Tirado, 2011; Boyd & Patterson, 2016; Seo & Kim, 2019). Over half of the participants in the current study agreed or strongly agreed that their work improved their time management skills and, even more than that, felt that their peer educating experience increased their communication and listening skills. Among the three subcategories of gains in this current study, those related to non-academic skillsets had the highest mean scores along with the smallest amount of variation in the scores.

In addition to the gains related to the subcategories, this study also found that the role the peer educators served in (peer tutor, SI Leader, or both) mattered more than the length of time they served in that role in terms of the means of the perceived gains. This study contributes to the research by comparing the subcategories of gains with the types of roles, finding that the peer tutor experience had statistically significant differences in the subcategories of gains. Peer tutors in the study had the highest mean scores for all three subcategories of academic performance and learning, self-confidence and fulfillment, and non-academic skillsets; the peer educator role was most impactful for those that served as peer tutors compared to the SI Leaders or those that had experience as both peer tutors and SI Leaders.

The roles differed in terms of which areas were most gained by role. The SI Leader experience leaned more heavily toward academic and self-confidence gains (Hoiland et al., 2020; Lozada & Johnson, 2019; Malm et al., 2012; Mason-

Innes, 2015). By comparison, the research related to peer tutors was focused largely on non-academic skillsets and academic gains (Cofer, 2020; De Backer et al., 2012; DeFeo & Caparas, 2014; Fiorella & Mayer, 2013; Seo & Kim, 2019; Sneddon, 2015; Unger et al. 2014). While all peer educators in this study noted perceived gains overall, analyses of the data showed that the tutors perceived gains to a greater degree than the SI Leaders. The unique nature of the roles may explain this difference in overall and subcategory gains. Peer tutors operate mostly in a one-on-one manner and in a more intimate setting, which may allow for development of these gains in extended ways; it is through these more intimate environments that peer tutors might see firsthand the value and results of their work. SI Leaders, by comparison, lead sessions in larger groups, focusing on facilitating content and not on the one-on-one interactions that peer tutors have.

### **Limitations**

There were limitations in the study as the peer educators who responded to the survey may have served in both roles at their center, which could present some challenges when reflecting on their gains. A peer educator could wonder which role to reflect on for different survey items, as they may have experienced gains specific to being an SI Leader or a peer tutor. Though there was a demographic item that allowed participants to state that they had been involved in both roles, the instrument did not take into account which role participants would be considering when selecting their responses, as the researcher believed that both roles may have played into their perceived gains. In the future, these special circumstances will be considered in data collection. Secondly, to reach peer educators from across the nation, the researcher relied on the centers' administrators to distribute the survey to their peer educators.

### **Implications for Practice**

Learning centers staffed with peer tutors and/or SI Leaders are a consistent presence on college campuses in the United States; however, assessment has been limited to how the roles help with tutees' and session attendees' retention and persistence rates. These peer educator experiences bring forth a new perspective and potential added value to their work in the higher education persistence equation; beyond the benefits they have on the students they serve, peer educators themselves experience several gains, as well.

This study provides the data needed to support arguments for increased resource allocation, showing that learning centers impact more than the students served by peer educators. It is important that learning center administrators understand this finding and allow for continued skill development, both in peer educator training and also in reflections following training. The items that scored lowest in the survey related to gains in confidence and fulfillment, which could indicate that peer educator training needs to incorporate structured reflection time so peer educators can more fully understand their experiences. The findings from this study can better inform training for peer tutors and SI Leaders, as participants expressed an appreciation for the skills they gained that would help them in their current courses and future professions.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This study provided insight into the peer tutor and SI Leader experiences as they relate to peer educators' perceived gains. Although the study drew from

a national and international pool of participants, additional study is warranted on these gains in relation to other variables. Since this study sought to explore gains related to role and length of experience in that role, other demographic variables were not sought. The first recommendation for future research would be to consider these additional, equally important demographic items, such as region of the country where the peer educator is employed, their type of institution and center, and their primary area of peer education. A review of the literature found that Moorehead (2021) examined the experience of diverse peer educators at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), finding similar gains but for this special population of peer educators. Additional research is needed to understand the unique experience as related to peer educators' personal demographics, like race and potentially first-generation student status.

### Conclusion

A review of the literature on the peer educator experience in campus learning centers found gains in three subcategories: academic performance and learning, non-academic skillsets, and self-confidence and fulfillment.

Although the peer educators in this study noted gains across the three subcategories, the items that received the most "strongly agree" or "agree" responses were in the non-academic skillsets area. Overall, the items in this subcategory had the highest mean scores and the least amount of variability. The self-confidence and fulfillment subcategory had the lowest mean of scores and the highest variability in these items.

Further analyses performed for the variables of type of role and length of time in that role found that a statistically significant difference did exist in the subcategories of gains for type of peer educator role; however, that same significance was not found for the length of time peer educators served in the role. Regardless of how long a peer educator served in their role, the means of the scores of these subcategories were not statistically different. In this study, it was the peer educator role, whether that be peer tutor, SI Leader, or both, that had the higher mean scores for the three subcategories. However, the peer educators who had one semester of experience had the highest group mean for this other variable, which is in the non-academic skillset subcategory. Thus, it is important to note that results did show that even one semester of work in the peer educator role resulted in gains. Reframing the work of peer tutors and SI Leaders to consider the impact these roles have on the peer educators themselves is a needed perspective shift in the research.

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