WHAT’S YOUR LAKER EFFECT?

Share your experiences as a Student Ambassador

THE VISIT EXPERIENCE

2017-2018

TRAINING MANUAL

THE STUDENT AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

MACKENZIE PRINS

Program Coordinator
Office of Admissions
(616) 331-2750
prinsmac@gvsu.edu
gvsu.edu/ambassadors
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome ................................................................. 3
Admissions Office ....................................................... 4
Admissions Staff .......................................................... 5
What We Do ............................................................... 6
Benefits ................................................................. 7
Your Audience ............................................................. 7
Admissions Expectations .............................................. 8
Self-Assessment .......................................................... 9
Getting Started ......................................................... 10
Day Of Information ...................................................... 11
Tour Structure ........................................................... 11
Presentation Tips ........................................................ 12
Talking Points ............................................................. 13-18
Website ................................................................. 19
Materials ................................................................. 20
Troubleshooting .......................................................... 20
Thank You ............................................................... 21
Thank you for your interest in becoming a Student Ambassador.

It is a very important, unique and rewarding position as you have the opportunity to influence the memories and experiences of what could be future Lakers!

**Student Ambassadors** are current Grand Valley State University students dedicated to sharing their college experiences with future Lakers. Their role is to volunteer throughout the year (about 4-5 hours each semester) at various on-campus recruitment events hosted by the Admissions Office. This program strives to bring students together from various academic disciplines, clubs and organizations, and cultural backgrounds to provide a positive and honest image of Grand Valley State University to prospective students, families, alumni and friends of the University.
The Admissions Office

Grand Valley’s Admissions office provides support for prospective students and families during their college search. GVSU admissions help students from their initial contact with the college, until their arrival and first day of classes. The office makes every effort to provide a positive and informative experience whether it is a phone call, personal appointment, or small group tour of campus.

For many of the prospective students, their first visit to campus is during their junior or senior year in high school. In order to add to their experience, we work extremely hard to treat each guest with respect and go above and beyond their individual expectations.

ADMISSIONS CYCLE

FALL
During the end of summer more high school seniors begin to visit prospective colleges and begin to fill out applications. Admissions Counselors will travel to high schools and community colleges throughout the state.

WINTER
Students continue to apply to scholarships and in January the financial aid season begins.

SUMMER
Decision Date Is May 1st. Student decided where to attend and Grand Valley hosts Summer Orientations for students to register for classes.
# ADMISSIONS STAFF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jodi Chycinski</td>
<td>Director of Admissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melanie Retberg</td>
<td>Associate Director of Admissions - Office Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonnie Ulmer-DeGraves</td>
<td>Associate Director of Admissions - Transfer and Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Hendree</td>
<td>Associate Director of Admissions - International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvador Lopez</td>
<td>Associate Director of Admissions - Diversity Recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Loving-McKay</td>
<td>Associate Director of Admissions - Southeast Michigan Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracey James-Heer</td>
<td>Associate Director of Admissions - Graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astin Martin</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Admissions - Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libby Bonnell</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Admissions - Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Eichberger</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Admissions - Orientation and Telecounseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallace Holder</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Admissions - Chicago Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrica Verett</td>
<td>Admissions Counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Martinez</td>
<td>Admissions Counselor/Financial Aid Counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackenzie Prins</td>
<td>Admissions Counselor – Student Ambassadors and Overnight Visit Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maegan Frierson</td>
<td>Admissions Counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Guerra</td>
<td>Admissions Counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Yarbrough</td>
<td>Admissions Counselor – International Assisting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT WE DO

Student Ambassadors contribute in the following ways:

- Represent Grand Valley at large visitation days
- Conduct campus wide tours
- Communicate the mission, values, and opportunities of the University
- Strengthen Grand Valley traditions
- Encourage involvement in the Grand Valley community
- Provide tips to incoming students on how to be successful at Grand Valley

As a Student Ambassador, you will have the opportunity to participate in several events, including:

Student Visitation Days
- around 200 people in attendance
- guests receive an overview of the university from an admissions counselor
- three students are asked to sign up for a student panel (in addition to the tour)
- tour of campus will last about 1 hour and 15 min

Laker Experience Days
- around 1,000 people in attendance
- guests receive an overview of the university from the director of admissions, have a chance to talk with faculty as well as attend various informational session
- tours of campus will leave every 15 minutes between 11-12pm

Small Group Presentations
- around 100 people in attendance
- guests receive an overview of the university from an admissions counselor
- guests receive quick remarks from a faculty on campus
- tours of campus will last about 1 hour and 15 min

Each semester, you may sign up for several different events. As a reminder, the time commitment is very small. Most Ambassador’s volunteer for about 3-4 events each semester. Any and all time that you can give is greatly appreciated!
BENEFITS

As a Student Ambassador you will develop a wide range of transferable skills that will benefit you:

- Enrich leadership skills
- Enhance communication skills
- Polish professional development
- Gain valuable volunteer experience
- Build your resume
- Network with Administration, Alumni and fellow students

Other benefits include earning Grand Valley memorabilia and having the opportunity to turn volunteer efforts into a paid position within the Admissions Office.

YOUR AUDIENCE

Grand Valley State University plays host to numerous guests each year. A successful Student Ambassador is able to identify the needs of a guest and effectively meet these needs. Each group will be different: their own personalities, their own specific questions, and their own reasons for visiting. Remember, you are here for them.

Guest may include, but are not limited to:

- High School Students (mostly juniors and seniors)
- Parents and Families
- Junior High and Elementary school students
- GVSU Alumni and Donors
- The local community

The most successful method to identify the needs of a guest is to LISTEN to what they have to say and ask. Remember that your guests include each person on the tour, not just the student. In fact in many groups the parents will do most of the talking.
ADMISSIONS EXPECTATIONS

PROFESSIONALISM:
- Positive representative of Grand Valley State University
- Appropriate attire: no sweatpants, no tank tops, no ripped jeans, nothing too tight or short, do NOT wear other school apparel – GVSU clothing is preferred
- Cell Phones, IPods, IPads, etc. turned OFF and put away
- Greet all guests and show courtesy to everyone
- SMILE

ENTHUSIASM:
- Be excited about what you do, enthusiasm is contagious
- Show interest in what your guests say and ask
- Enjoy your time with your guests, make the tour as interactive as possible (ask them questions)
- Share your experiences (appropriate experiences)
- HAVE FUN!

RESPONSIBILITY:
- Be dependable and accountable
- Show up if you sign up – do NOT cancel last minute
- Our guests are expecting their tours to be covered
- Show up on time for your events (5-10 minutes early)
- Keep track of time – tours should be around 1 hour, try not to go too fast or too slow and make the most of everyone’s time

BEING INFORMATIVE:
- Know your facts
- Share your experiences; keep opinions to a minimum
- Allow for questions, especially at the end
- Don’t be ashamed if you don’t know an answer
- Follow up with Admissions on all unanswered questions

HONESTY:
- If you don’t know an answer, do NOT make it up
- Tell them you’d be happy to find the answer back in the office at the conclusion of the tour
- Don’t over-exaggerate or lie about a fact
- If you hesitate to answer a question or are wondering how to phrase something it’s generally best not to answer that question and direct it to an admissions counselor
SELF-ASSESSMENT

Take a minute and answer the following questions for yourself...

What do you hope to gain from being a Student Ambassador?

Why did you choose Grand Valley State University?

What opportunities and experiences have made your time at GVSU valuable and successful?

*Remember your responses before every tour and use it as motivation to give a great experience for future Lakers

Now take some time to think about some very common questions you may encounter...

- How would you compare GVSU to other schools?
- What is there to do in Allendale on the weekends? Does everyone go home?
- Is Grand Valley a party school?
- How are the professors?
- What don’t you like about GVSU? What’s one thing you would change?
- Do you get a lot of snow around here?
- What are the best programs? What are the best housing options? What are the best...?
TRAINING

Training for Ambassadors is crucial to the success of the program. New Ambassadors are required to complete the following before participating in any upcoming events:
- Shadow one tour of campus
- Review training materials/attend a training session

As an Ambassador, you will be expected to **attend one fall training session** every year. It is important to recognize the growth and constant changes happening around the University. This training will act as a refresher, as well as the opportunity for you to network with and mentor new Ambassadors.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

You can find all of the events for the year listed on the website. However, as groups want to visit campus there may be unexpected days/times that I need you for.

To sign up for an event, email prinsmac@gvsu.edu. Even if an event looks “full” you are still able to sign up for any day. Please remember that if you sign up, you must show up. Only sign up for events that you know you can attend.

VOLUNTEER

The Student Ambassador program is a great opportunity to share your experiences with prospective students and guests. Your time commitment is very small, but highly important to the successful recruitment of future Grand Valley State University students.

As stated earlier most students sign up for about 3-4 events per semester. There will be approximately 5 events in the fall, 8 events in the spring (end of winter semester) and 8 events over the summer. Ambassadors are only expected to give about 1 hour and 15 minutes of their time for each event.
Welcome your guests

Introduce yourself
(name, academic year, major, hometown, involvement)

Allow guests to introduce themselves

Explain the tour
(about 1 hour, walking tour, invite questions)

Give the tour

Summarize your points
(answer any last minute questions)

Thank your visitors for coming

Have your guests fill out evaluation cards

Day of Information

Student Ambassador Responsibilities the day of each event:

- If you are available, you may be asked to arrive early and welcome guests, check them in, and help direct traffic into the event
- 3-4 students will be asked to sit on a student panel that occurs before the tour
  - This is an opportunity for guests to ask you various questions (see self-assessment)
- Provide a tour of campus

Tour Structure
PRESENTATION TIPS

Remember that your job is to connect prospective families and students to Grand Valley by sharing your experiences. **You are the Grand Valley Story tellers.** By sharing your stories you provide guests with a sense of GVSU’s Community and help them to share in our community. These are FUTURE GVSU students! What are some of our signature moments? **“The campus culture is...”**

- Do not walk backwards
- Do not walk and talk; with larger groups, get to the location and then stop and share the information instead of shouting it along the way
- Do not bring personal belongings with you on your tour
- Do not compare Grand Valley to other institutions, you are a GV expert only
- Know your facts, prepare ahead of time
- Share your own personal experiences
- Keep campus tours to around 1 hour
- Explain time limitation and give permission at conclusion of tour to explore on their own (ex. art department, inside library, other housing)

While you are here to share your experiences, there are a few topics that you MUST touch on throughout your tour:

- **Academics**
  - Average class size is 26
  - 90% of classes at GVSU are smaller than 40 students
  - All of classes are taught by faculty, we do not use teacher/graduate assistants
- **Student Services**
  - Professor office hours
  - Free tutoring for every 100 and 200 level course
  - Writing center, math center, language lab, knowledge market, etc.
  - Career counseling, academic advising
- **Housing**
- Grand Rapids Campus
  - Busing system
TALKING POINTS

What am I supposed to say?
You are NOT expected to remember or even say all of the following talking points, there is simply not enough time. Please use this as an example of what to say at various locations around campus.

Once you shadow your tour – you will have an even BETTER idea of how to present information and what information families want to know.

Student Services Lobby

Student services are housed in one location for convenience:

1st floor: Records, Registration, Student Employment, Financial Aid
2nd: Dean of Students, Career Services, Career Counseling & Development, Counseling Center, Tutoring, Advising Resources, Special Programs
3rd: Admissions

Stories:

Circular: College is a big transition for many students. Some students adjust well, while others might not. Career Services, on the 2nd floor, hosts group and individual counseling for students who might need it.

Clock Tower and the Career Library, located on the 2nd floor, is a great place to learn about professional development, internships, and career paths. They utilize eDiscover, O*Net, and Bridges, which are all computer programs to help student explore different careers and find out what career might be geared towards them.

“I visited the financial aid office and they helped me...”

Clock Tower
(Point out the Cook-DeWitt Center)

- 236 Seat lecture hall
- Catholic mass and non-denominational services on Sundays
- Variety of events held here: weddings, religious services, guest speakers, campus events, music recitals and student organizations use auditorium
- Clock Tower is a working carillon tower, chimes every 15 minutes.
Mary Idema Pew Library

- Flexible space, 19 group study rooms
- Approximately 1,500 seats, 30 different furniture types
- Self check-out stations, automated retrieval system
- Knowledge Market, Learning Lab, Technology Showcase

Stories:

- Knowledge Market: “I needed help with a research project...”
- When you need a place to study, there’s a variety of options: alone or together, quiet or loud, indoor or outdoor

Kirkhof Center

- Central location for students to hangout, get food and meet with their organizations
- Houses the Women’s Center, LGBT Resource Center, Office of Multicultural Affairs, and the Veterans Lounge
- KC 0008 holds Laker traditions, Student Senate and Spotlight Productions
- Many Student Media opportunities are offered in Kirkhof such as Whale radio, GVTV and the Lanthorn.
- Billiard and Foosball tables, Playstation and X-Boxes available, mini movie theater

Stories:

- The Community Service Learning Center can help you get engaged in the community.
- When you need information, for on-campus or off-campus, visit 20/20 desk. You can also stop by there to get game room supplies or tickets to the theatre!
- If you want to get involved as a student, visit the Student Life Office. Over 400 clubs and organizations. Any club can be started with 4 students and an advisor. Talk about organizations you’re involved in.

Performing Arts Center & Meijer Honors College

Performing Arts Center:

- Houses music classrooms and faculty offices, practice rooms, two dance studios, the Art Gallery and a music technology lab
- New renovation added a two-story, 47,000 square-foot edition that includes a black box theatre, support spaces, two theatre classrooms and ensemble rooms

Frederik Meijer Honors College

- Completed in 2008, the Honors building houses “smart” classrooms, and honors faculty offices.
• Contains 4 bedroom, 2 bedroom, and studio living options for Honors students
• Geared toward students with an ACT around or above 28, SAT around or above 1300, and a high school GPA of 3.5 or higher. Requires a separate online application after being accepted to GVSU
• Honors students take separate Honors courses instead of general education courses, specific major classes do not change

Stories:

✓ Typically put on 4-5 large performances a year, as well as numerous one-acts and student directed plays.
✓ “My friend was a part of the Honors College and had a class…”
✓ “I have a friend that got a music scholarship by auditioning before they came here.”
✓ You do not have to be a music or theater major to perform in ensembles and plays.

Lake Plaza (Heaven & Earth Sculpture)
Houses many different academic buildings, was the original campus in the early ‘60s

• Lakes Superior, Huron, Michigan, and Ontario contain lecture halls, classrooms, departments, and academic office
• Lake Superior: School of Communication
• Lake Michigan: Administration, Human Resources, Business & Finance, University Counsel, News & Information Services
• Lake Huron: English and Classics
• Lake Ontario: Padnos International Center (50 different Study Abroad programs to 26 different countries. Links to 5000 other Study Abroad trips. It’s the ONLY “open” Study Abroad program in Michigan, ranked #5 in the country), and the Writing Department: Writing Center, Liberal Studies, Women & Gender Studies
• Zumberge Hall: Administration, Human Resources, Business & Finance, University Counsel, News & Information Services
• Seidman Hall: rare books, Civil War documents, study areas
• Au Sable: Psychology, Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology, International Relations

Stories:

✓ Founded in 1960, first class held in 1963
✓ Study Abroad are some of the most valuable experiences a college student can have
✓ If you have been abroad, please share your experience with the group. Perhaps a friend studied abroad and shared some stories.
✓ Share a positive personal story about visiting the Writing Center, or meeting with a professor
The Commons

- Point out VanSteeland Arboretum
- Walk over Little Mac Bridge
  (270ft across, 70ft high)
- Many trails run through the ravine, students can walk all the way to the Grand River.
- Club Rowing team practices on the River
- Grand Valley focuses on undergraduate achievement and scholarship
- Graduate level research at the undergrad level
- April Student Scholarship Days: opportunity for students to showcase research projects

WALK PAST: The Commons

- Lower Commons: Papa Johns, Bleeker St., Freshens Energy Zone, Jump! Asian Cuisine
- Upper Commons: Fresh Food Company
- Explain Meal Plan:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>Meals</th>
<th>Dining Dollars</th>
<th>Cost Of Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19+</td>
<td>19/wk</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$1,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14+</td>
<td>14/wk</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td>$1,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+</td>
<td>10/wk</td>
<td>$350</td>
<td>$1,550</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WALK THROUGH: Mackinac Hall

- Largest academic building on campus
- SHOW a classroom (new classroom along the east hallway if possible)
- Houses: faculty offices, conference rooms, classrooms and computer labs
- College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Department and Advising Center, Regional Math and Science Advising, and International Technology
- Department offices: Geography and Planning, Hospitality and Tourism Management, Movement Science, Modern Languages, Philosophy, Mathematics, Statistics, Computer Science, and History
- Average class size is 26, though we do have lecture halls that fit 120-140 in Henry Hall.
- Teachers teach all classes. We do not use graduate assistants or teaching assistants
- 90% of classes at GVSU are smaller than 40 students
- We offer over 88 majors, with over 200 areas of study (minors and different classes you can take), 38 graduate study programs, and 2 main campus areas: Allendale and Grand Rapids
- Allendale is our main campus, downtown Grand Rapids houses our Education, Social Work, Criminal Justice, Engineering, Medical, and Business campuses.
• For the past decade, we’ve been rated one of the highest academic colleges in the state of Michigan

Stories:

Tell a story about a teacher or class you had...

Housing

• 6,012 students live on campus
• Different types of housing: Traditional, Cluster, Suite and Apartment Styles (1 and 2 bedroom)
• HHLC offers Linked Course Program where faculty collaborate for richer classroom experiences
• Living and Learning Communities: Honors, Women in Science and Engineering, Movement Science, Gender Justice House, Art Living, International House
• Housing Staff and Roles: 12 communities, 115 RAs, 14 Grad Staff, 12 Masters-level Staff, Some staff on call 24/7, 365 days a year
• HOUSING POLICIES:
  o Community council implements programming
  o Gender inclusive housing option – application required
  o Exterior doors locked 24 hours
  o Quiet hours 12a-10a weekends
  o First 90 laundry cycles are free
• Seeing the traditional-style, shared bathroom is available on our 360° views

Stories:

Tell any of the numerous appropriate on-campus stories you have (going to an event, hanging out in the residence halls, etc)

Kleiner Commons

• No smoking in any buildings
• The Marketplace, Qdoba, expanded dining area
• 24 Convenience Store and Java City
• Sports Court in back

Fieldhouse/Rec Center

• Freshmen are allowed cars on campus ($420/year)
• Campus security: Grand Valley Police, Community Police Officers (point out Department of Public Safety)
• Bus service to Grand Rapids with stop at Meijer (Wilson and Lake Michigan Dr.)
**Fieldhouse/Rec Center (Pool Entrance)**

- Main athletic building on campus
- Houses basketball courts, weight rooms, pool, athletic offices, practice gymnasiums, rock climbing wall, dance rooms and a gymnastics room
- GVSU is the #1 Division II athletic program, and has earned either 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Directors cup for 15 straight years
- Three levels of play: NCAA DII, Club sports and intramural sports (explain the differences)
  - 50 club sports
  - 20 intramural sports
  - 20 varsity sports
- Facilities are open for student use free of charge, and there is no fee to attend sporting events
- The Laker Turf building is located behind the Fieldhouse and contains an indoor Olympic sized track and turf soccer field
- Over 160 student employees each year

**Stories:**

- 🎧 Talk about games you have been to
- 🎧 Talk about the Rec center if you use it, or joke about not using it and just eating...
- 🎧 Talk about Football Saturdays, “Saturday nights under the Lights”

**Henry Hall and Padnos**

- Houses Biology, Geology, Chemistry, Biomedical Sciences, and Physics
- Well-equipped labs for research and studying
- Show Loutit Lecture Hall 101, 102 OR 103 (if available)
- Computer labs available for students from 7am-1am
- Students are encouraged to bring a computer to campus

**Student Services**

In closing:

- Things they may have missed: Art building, Papa Johns, Health Services
- Encourage them to explore on their own
- Thank them for coming
- Remind them to call Admissions Office if they have any questions
- Tell them you hope they had a good time
- Ask guests to complete evaluation so we can continue to improve tours
WEBSITE

The student ambassador website will provide you with various tools in preparing you to become a great student ambassador! Please take your time in familiarizing yourself with the different pages.

www.gvsu.edu/ambassadors/

Calendar of Events

- Fall/Spring/Summer events will update as the year goes on
- Email prinsmac@gvsu.edu to sign up for any event
- Can click on link to events and review what you are signed up for

Training

- Tour Guide Route: talking points
- Tour Map: general flow of campus tour
- GVSU Quick Facts: good way to keep up on your numbers and facts (do not feel like you need to have these memorized)
- Academic Calendar
- Videos: great way to train yourself on campus resources
MATERIALS

When you arrive the day of your event, you will receive a sheet of paper similar to what you see below.

1. **The Fieldhouse & Rec Center**: start/introductions (fitness/sports)
2. **Kleiner**: walk by (Qdoba, late night, etc.)
3. Show **TWO styles of housing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>North C room 136</th>
<th>#1</th>
<th>1BR Apt Style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H.H. room 164D</td>
<td>#2</td>
<td>Cluster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **Mackinac Hall**: go in and walk by classes (academics)
5. **Commons**: go in upper (meal plans)
6. **Student Services Building**: walk by (tutoring, financial aid, etc)
7. **Head towards clock tower**
8. **Cook-Dewitt**: walk by (faith based groups)
9. **Lake Plaza & Honors College**: point out
10. **Performing Arts Center**: point out (Louis Armstrong Theatre)
11. **Library**: go in
12. **Kirkhof Center**: go inside (clubs/orgs/etc.)
13. **Kindschi Hall of Science**: go in (bookstore, classrooms, labs, etc.)
14. **The Fieldhouse & Rec Center**: go in and end

This sheet will include **YOUR** route and the housing options that you will be showing that day. You must show everything on the sheet given to you... starting at #1 and working your way down the list.

You are more than welcome to bring this sheet with you on the tour and reference it along the way.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If you are running late, or sick, or need to miss a scheduled event for any reason, please contact me on my cell (616) 298-5262, and prinsmac@gvsu.edu or the designated Admissions representative helping out while I am traveling. Our guests are expecting their tour to be on time so we need to be prepared.

*It is imperative that we fill each tour position.*
After reviewing this manual, if you have any additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you need more information from me or would like to meet one on one before you feel comfortable giving a tour, I would be more than happy to do so.

Thank again for your dedication in bettering your Laker Community!

MACKENZIE PRINS
Program Coordinator
Office of Admissions
(616) 331-2750
prinsmac@gvsu.edu

gvsu.edu/ambassadors