

STEM Assistants' Feedback

Assistants developed in-depth professional connections with their faculty mentor that are likely to have long term effects on being a support system for them as they move on to a four-year institution. They felt like they were given an opportunity to “give back to others” at BC. They also viewed themselves as gaining teaching and leadership skills that would help them in the workplace. Feedback also indicated:

- STEM Assistants are developing a deeper understanding of the subject matter through their mentoring from the faculty member and their tutoring role with students.
- STEM Assistants are having opportunities to make contacts with professionals in the field, learn about opportunities related to scholarships, internships, transferring to 4-year institutions and such through their closer contact with faculty.
- Serving as a STEM assistant builds their commitment to the discipline and/or STEM career they have selected.

Faculty Focus Group Feedback

Tutoring outside of class was an important role for the Assistants. Faculty indicated that Assistants were “indispensable” and often took initiative when preparing material for these sessions. They reported that the Assistants said they better understood the challenges of teaching, and that they were communicative about areas where the class needed further explanation by the instructor. Several had Assistants who developed a consistent following, especially when working in the classroom itself and/or close to class time. In the cases where the course included a lab, the STEM Assistants helped with lab set up and circulated among the students throughout the lab period answering questions, providing assistance, and guiding learning as requested. In other courses with hands-on activities in class, such as C++ programming, the STEM assistant greatly expanded the instructor’s capacity to help students by stepping in to cover details that made the class run more smoothly and ensuring that every student received personal attention.