



Academic and Cultural Enrichment



ACE@UPIKE.EDU



UPIKE ACE



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About ACE

ACE is a federally funded TRIO program focusing on the success of first-generation students. The goal of ACE is to improve student academic performance and increase retention and graduation rates while educating students on the importance of financial wellness. We serve 165 students. Once you have been enrolled into the program, you will remain in the program until you graduate.

To be accepted as an ACE program participant, you must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. **Be a first-generation college student**
(neither parent has a four-year college degree)
2. **Meet federally set income guidelines**
3. **Be a student with a documented learning or physical disability**
(the student must have or will need to be registered with the Disability Resource Center)



Why ACE?

ACE has been on UPIKE's campus since 2001 keeping up to date with all resources on campus. We have helpful connections to offices to better serve our students.

ACE is a place for students to have a home away from home. We have monthly activities and holiday celebrations. We have a kitchen area and lounge space with TVs, office laptops for student use, and calculator checkouts if needed. We have study rooms, counseling rooms, and a conference table that students use to hangout and study.

ACE SERVICES

Peer Mentor Program

Newly enrolled ACE participants will have the advantage of being assigned an upperclassman as a peer mentor to help them navigate the processes and experiences associated with being a first-generation college freshman. Mentors and students build relationships that enhance the ACE participant's first-year experience through various activities including M & M Connect Groups.

Being a mentor with the ACE program taught me just as much as I taught others. It helped me grow, feel more confident and really connect with my mentees. It's been one of the best parts of my college experience!

Mentor Brooke Neal, Class of 2025 (Right)

Major: Nursing

"Having a mentor was more than just someone to send reminders for events and ACE services. My mentor was someone who gave me support, understanding and friendship. She made the connection personal yet professional enough that I would reach out to her myself. My mentee experience allowed me to be comfortable with transitioning to college and adjusting to this new life as a first-gen student."

Mentee Faith Anderson, Class of 2028 (Left)

Major- Elementary Education



ACE SERVICES

Grant Aid/ First-Gen Scholarship



First- and Second-year students can apply for grant aid, if Pell eligible. Students must be active in the program and have an unmet financial need.

With the First-Gen Scholarship you can apply if you are a first-generation student and an active participant in the ACE program.

"The ACE First Gen Scholarship provided me with many opportunities, one of which was the ability to worry less about finances and focus more on my academics. As a full-time student with two jobs, I was able to work fewer hours and make the President's List, all without the stress of balancing everything".

Haley McKinney, Class of 2027

Major: Communication

Academic Support and Counseling

ACE offers academic support to students who need help with classes. We can help with academic planning, goal setting, and guidance in everyday problems. We can provide counseling and support when needed.



ACE events have given me a sense of community that I don't have elsewhere on campus. As a commuter student, being a member of ACE has been a big help to me. I visit the ACE office every day to relax and study between classes because the ACE office is a safe space for

me, and I don't know what I would do without it.

Dalton Watt, Class of 2027

Major: Secondary Education
Social Studies

Financial Guidance

We help students complete the FAFSA, go over their financial aid packages and help with finding work study jobs when needed.



Jump Start

The Jump Start program is held annually during the week prior to UPIKE FIRST WEEK activities and requirements. Twenty-five commuter and residential students are selected to get a jump start on their college success by moving into their dorm room early (if applicable). Students participate in activities designed to assist in getting a jump start on meeting faculty and staff, making new friends, building a connection with their peer mentor, and completing the freshman service project early. Jump Start invitations will be sent out before August.

ACE SERVICES

Graduate and Professional School Preparation

We assist students in preparing for and applying to graduate or professional programs, application essays and financial aid.

As an Optometry Scholars Program (OSP) student, ACE provided me with support and a place to study and focus on difficult classes. They also helped me through the application process in applying for admission to the Kentucky College of Optometry (KYCO). I am proud to say I will be attending KYCO in the fall!

Neal Jones, Class of 2025

Major: Biomedical Science



ACE has helped me prepare for other classes required as an Osteopathic Medical Scholars Program (OMSP) student and the ACE office has been a great place to hang out.

Keleigh Sturgill, Class of 2025

Major: Biomedical Sciences

OUR SUCCESS RATES

90%

RETENTION RATE

98%

GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING

52%

DEGREE COMPLETION



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