Learning Center Hires Director, Assistant Director, Tutoring Coordinator

The Learning Center is excited to announce two new professional staff and a new position for a long-time coordinator.

In June 2016, Dr. Jennifer Haley accepted the position of Learning Center Director, which was vacated by Gary Ritz in July 2015. “I started in the Learning Center as a tutor, then worked as a graduate assistant for Jackie Harris. I loved it! After working for sixteen years as a tutoring coordinator for the Science and Humanities Desk and the Supplemental Instruction program, I am ready to captain the ship. I am so excited to be working with an energetic, creative new staff!” Jenny serves as the Past President of the National College Learning Center Association, has earned a Level 4 Lifetime Certification as a learning center leadership professional, and holds a Ph.D. in Composition and Rhetoric. She also teaches in the Writing Proficiency program at Ball State.

James Mills was hired as the Assistant Director in August 2016, replacing Robert Plenis, who resigned in July 2016. Like Jenny, Jim got his start in the Learning Center years ago as a summer tutor. “Like the swallows of Capistrano, I have returned home to the Learning Center. I have stepped into my new roles of Assistant Director and Testing Coordinator with verve, dedication, and giddiness over the exciting new opportunities that await the newly restructured Learning Center. I am both honored and humbled to be a part of such a dynamic team of professionals!” Jim brings with him experience in advising, teaching, programming, and serving students with disabilities. These skills were developed during Jim’s short stint at Purdue University and nine years in the Office of Academic Advising at Ball State University.

Elizabeth Fallon was hired as the Tutoring Coordinator in September 2016. “Before devoting my full-time work to the Ball State University Learning Center, I worked at Rhodes State College as a Professional Tutor and Adjunct Instructor. Additionally, I worked at Franklin University as an Instructional Designer developing online courses for international students. Earlier in my career I developed consumer products for corporate brands including Bath & Body Works, Febreze, and Longaberger baskets. As you might guess, I enjoy addressing challenges with innovative solutions. It is truly a privilege to join the impressive team of Learning Center tutors, SI leaders, graduate assistants, office assistants, and staff members. I look forward to working together with everyone to support our clients and each other.” Elizabeth is completing a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction-Education Technology from the University of Toledo.

Learning Center Usage: August 2016-November 2016

Tutoring: 7,135 visits
1,375 students

Supplemental Instruction: 4,513 visits
912 students

Test proctoring: 755 tests
187 students

So far this year, we have served 2,474 students for a total of 12,403 visits!
The Learning Center team has been busy this semester! We have re-structured our physical space to provide a more intuitive experience for students.

A center that was previously divided into four separate areas has a new, streamlined presence: a Tutoring Desk, which provides tutoring in over one hundred courses on campus and is staffed by 85 tutors and 7 graduate assistants, and a Testing Desk, which provides test accommodations for students with disabilities.

Need a tutor? Visit/call the Tutoring Desk!

765-285-3780

Are you a student with a disability who needs to take test in an accommodated environment? First, you must register with Disability Services. Then visit/call the Testing Desk!

765-285-3779
"My Tutor Explains Complex Content in an Easy Way"

Learning Center Client Satisfaction Surveys Validate the Work That Tutors Do

Each semester, the Learning Center conducts a Client Satisfaction Survey.

This fall, 289 students completed the survey, and the results were outstanding!

The majority of students (71%) visit the Learning Center because they “need a chance to talk through some of the concepts I’m learning and to be quizzed.” Most students land here because of a referral from a professor, advisor, coach, or RA (38%), a friend (37%), or their parents (36%). Students indicated that their tutors were knowledgeable about the content (98%), answered questions and asked the student questions to engage them in discussion (98%), used appropriate strategies as needed (98%), and worked with the student to assess needs and goals (96%). 97% would recommend the Learning Center to a friend, and 96% would use the Learning Center for a future course. Students suggested that the Learning Center hire more tutors, offer longer sessions, and offer tutoring in more courses.

Clients continue to demonstrate their gratitude for our top-notch services:

“This is the first time I've used the tutoring part of the LC and I LOVE it.”

“Sophia is amazing at her job! She has given me such a confidence boost and helped me be better at time management/study skills that I have lacked until now!”

“Jacob is an amazing tutor. I was very anxious about going to the LC but he has done a great job. He explains everything very well and if I don’t understand, he takes the time to make sure I do. Very good tutor. 10/10 would recommend.”

“I have been beyond impressed with the LC as a whole. Everyone is very kind and my tutor has been very helpful. The desk staff is awesome and their phone personnel is also very kind. More students at BSU should take advantage of the LC.”
Meet the Tutors!

Solomon Addai, Math  Nick Albers, Business  Iesha Alspaugh, History  Emily Barsic, French

Shae Baugh, Sciences  Sophia Borzabadi, Study Skills  Elizabeth Buenger, Sciences  Jacob Carmichael, Math

Beth Carpenter, Writing  Hannah Carpenter, Writing  Megan Clark, Chemistry  Rylee Clemmons, Sciences

Meghan Cook, Math  Abigail Cordray, German  Brooke Creson, Pre-Nursing

Courtney DeRemer, Anatomy  Emily Dewig, Geography/Spanish  Madison Doyle, CJC  Kyla Duff, Chemistry

Hannah Dwyer, History  Jesse Evers, Math/Business  Alex Getz, Math/Business  Austin Glaub, History

Von Grogg, Chemistry  Leah Harmon, Nursing  Tim Hoblin, Math  Heidi Homan, Sciences
Meet the Tutors!

Emily Howland, Spanish  Alexis Kampe, Sciences  Tyler Kern, Study Skills  Hailey Konermann, Psychology

Meg LaFollette, Pre-Nursing  Geneva LaForce, Sciences  Danielle Lain, History  Tuan Le, Math/Physics

Nikki Maexner, Math  Olivia Manahan, Chemistry  Nick Marchio, Spanish/Writing  Kevin McMinn, Math

Emily Mundell, Study Skills  Destiny Mundy, Chemistry/History  Savannah Myers, Anthropology/History

Melissa Normington, Math/Business  Kristen Parks, Spanish/Writing  Lilly Reece, Math/Business
Meet the Tutors!

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Estelle Rousseau, Sciences  Elise Sandberg, Sciences  Maggie Schmits, Chemistry  Ellen Shepherd, Exercise Science

Hunter Sikora, Sciences  Daniel Sitler, Music  Olivia Smith, Sciences/Math  Edward Sumaila, Math

Joel Summer, Spanish/Writing  Teng Teng, Math  Kenzie Troxell, Psychology  Zach Wakefield, French/Japanese/Writing

Not pictured: Bridget Cronin, Pre-Nursing; Robyn Dyer, Math; Hayley Eadie, Writing; Liz Eppler, French; Rachel Haucha, Nursing; Michael Holcomb, Physics; Mina Hossain, Math/Business; Kati Isbell, Spanish; Kaitlyn Kirkpatrick, Sciences; Ashley Kraatz, Math/Spanish; Braelyn Martin, Study Skills/Writing; Abbey Meister, Pre-Nursing/Nursing; Marston Miller, Math/Business; Liv Mishler, Communications/Math; Haylee Mitchell, Pre-Nursing/Nursing; Adam Mullins, Math; Paxton Parris, Pre-Nursing; Olivia Peterson, Spanish/Japanese; Jill Robinson, Business; Renee Russell, Pre-Nursing/Nursing; Michael Santos, Political Science; Nick Simpson, Math/Business; Eric Stemshorn, Math; John Teusch, CJC; Alex Thein, Math/Business; Pamela Umutesi, Math; Abby Waggoner, Chemistry; Bailee Weaver, Spanish; Jessica Wiederholt, Pre-Nursing

We will be featuring the SI leaders, graduate assistants, and office assistants in the spring issue!
The Lead Tutor program started in Spring 2015 as an opportunity for veteran tutors to be able to contribute to the Learning Center’s success and to develop individual leadership and professional skills. Each semester, a group of tutors who have completed at least one year of tutor training and are certified as a Level 2 Advanced Tutor are chosen to participate in the program.

The responsibilities of a Lead Tutor are: 1) mentoring beginning tutors; 2) observing tutors and offering them feedback to help foster their development; 3) collaborating with fellow Lead Tutors to present a tutor in-service training session; 4) serving as a resource and guide for training for all Learning Center tutors; and 5) collaborating with Learning Center Coordinators to discuss Learning Center topics and events.

Lead Tutors for Fall 2016: Olivia Manahan, Alex Getz, Tim Hoblin, Zach Wakefield, and Sophia Borzabadi. This excellent team began the semester by offering a training in-service on the topic of motivation; they are now creating a tutor training video.

Sophia Borzabadi (Noblesville, IN) — Sophia, a junior majoring in Elementary Education and concentrating in Gifted & Talented Education, is a study skills tutor. When asked about her experiences as a Lead Tutor, Sophia stated, “My favorite part of working as a Lead Tutor is guiding and training other tutors to be the best difference makers that they can be. Working with clients, tutors, and friends to advance the Learning Center is a beautiful thing!”

Alex Getz (Hamilton, OH) — I am currently a senior triple majoring in Finance, Accounting and Economics. I tutor a multitude of the math and business courses in which the Learning Center offers. I love being a Lead Tutor because as a tutor myself, I am always looking to better my tutoring abilities and explore different strategies to use during my sessions. By creating the in-service, updating training modules, and evaluating other tutors, I have not only been able to better myself, but also help others in their tutoring abilities, which has been a fantastic experience.

Tim Hoblin (Frankfort, IL) — Tim, a senior majoring in Actuarial Science, is a math and business tutor. When asked about his experience as a Lead Tutor, Tim stated, “Being a Lead Tutor has been great because it has given me the opportunity to extend my knowledge as a tutor not only to clients but to tutors as well. Taking a larger role in a practice I am already passionate about is something I greatly enjoy.”

Olivia Manahan (Monticello, IN) — I am currently a senior majoring in chemistry and biochemistry, looking to continue on into graduate school. At the Learning Center, I tutor the majority of our offered chemistry courses. I particularly enjoy being a lead tutor because it allows me to help new tutors develop their skills further. When I first began working at the LC, I was nervous that I wasn’t doing my job right. It is nice to be able to provide guidance and reassurance to newer people, as well as provide them with some handy tricks that can make their jobs easier. It has been a fulfilling experience.

Zach Wakefield (Lowell, IN) — I am a French major and Japanese minor. I tutor these subjects in addition to writing. I find it very rewarding to help students through their courses and see them understand material that used to be difficult for them. Being a lead tutor has not only allowed me to pass on what I have learned about tutoring to newer tutors, but also to learn new methods from more experienced tutors in different areas. The give and take nature of the lead position has been very beneficial to me.

Our Lead Tutors have continued to show excellence in all that they do!
Thank you to the departing student staff!

Liz Rehmer, Graduate Assistant

Liz has worked in the Learning Center for five semesters, first as a tutor for psychology and philosophy, and then as a graduate assistant in charge of scheduling clients and supervising tutors. “I have great relationships and wonderful memories with fellow GAs, tutors as well as clients. I have also gained a great deal of experience and confidence in myself as a professional, especially with working in a team environment and with clients. I plan to complete an internship in speech pathology at Northwest Allen County Schools and at Lutheran Hospital in Fort Wayne. I will graduate with my masters degree in speech pathology in July; afterwards I plan to move to Indianapolis and begin my career as a speech language pathologist.” Learning Center Director Jenny Haley adds that Liz has been an invaluable part of the Learning Center team: “We couldn’t have accomplished the big changes this summer without Liz. She has gone above and beyond in her efforts to provide academic support to students. She will be greatly missed!”

Nick Albers, business tutor

Nick has worked in the Learning Center for three semesters tutoring Accounting 201 and ISOM 125. He will embark on student teaching at Muncie Central during the spring semester, then pursue his Master’s Degree in Business. “As an education major, I was able to increase my ability to teach students and maintain a positive relationship with my clients. I looked forward to seeing how much my clients have progressed throughout the semester and were able to master content they used to struggle with. I also enjoyed interacting with the other tutors and GA’s in the LC!”

Hannah Dwyer, Humanities tutor and GA helper

Hannah has worked in the Learning Center for two semesters tutoring history, political science, geography, and sociology. She has been a tremendous asset as graduate assistant helper as well. Hannah will be student teaching in the spring to prepare for her career as a middle or high school social studies teacher. “I have gained so much! I have been able to gain new friends and interact with students who are eager to learn more about social sciences.”

Brandon Ritter, Psychology 100 SI Leader

“I worked for the LC for a few short months during the second half of this semester as the replacement SI leader for PSYS 100 taught by Ron Trueove. It was a real honor to have been able to serve in this role and I gained a lot from it. I gained better time management skills when it came to preparing the lessons and slides I needed for each session, especially since I had three sessions a week. I also gained a greater understanding of how to relate psychology to people in different ways by using a variety concrete examples that were different from what Ron used in class. I am looking forward to finishing out the semester strong with my students and then returning as only a TA for next semester for Ron again. My plans for the future are to graduate in May and then hopefully attend Medical School to study Neurology.”

David Huston, Anatomy 201 SI Leader

This has been David’s first semester as an SI leader for Anatomy 201. David has gained satisfaction and a sense of purpose from helping people to achieve in this difficult course. His future plans: “Have an awesome Thanksgiving meal with plenty of pie, be a good dad and a compassionate internal medicine physician.”

The Learning Center is also bidding farewell to the following tutors, GAs, and front desk staff: Von Grogg, Maggie Schmits, Haylee Mitchell, Abby Waggoner, Elise Sandberg, Jacob Carmichael, Leah Harmon, Joel Summer, Michael Santos, Nikkie Maexner, Savannah Myers, Emily Mundell, and Natalie Weisman.
Tutors are certified by the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA), providing a national standard for skills, training, and recognition for successful work.

SI Leaders are trained according to the rules and procedures of the International Center for Supplemental Instruction.

The Learning Center is certified by the National Association for Developmental Education (NADE), an organization that recognizes programs that meet or exceed the criteria of good practices as defined by the professional research and literature of the field.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Learning Center is to enhance the academic success of Ball State University students by providing free peer tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, and test proctoring for students with disabilities. In addition, the Learning Center serves as a scholarly pre-professional experience for undergraduate and graduate student employees. Finally, the Learning Center strives to impact the extended university community through collaboration with faculty and staff and through outreach programs.

Goals

- Maintain the university’s commitment to the promotion of student success by providing academic assistance through peer tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, and program development which pertains to specific classes as well as broader academic skills.
- Develop in each student the skills necessary for the attainment of academic, career, and life goals.
- Contribute to the retention rate of first-year students.
- Support the four-year graduate rate goal of 50% by 2017.
- Continue professional training of the professional and student staff so that current theories, research, and teaching strategies can be implemented within the program.
- Guide students to reach their academic potential while realizing the benefits of academic collaboration.
- Students who participate in Supplemental Instruction will develop study skills and a greater understanding of course content, and they will successfully complete high-risk courses.
- Students who attend tutoring sessions will be successful in gaining study skills and content knowledge in a relaxed, informal learning environment with their peers. They will benefit from interactive tutoring sessions that focus on problem-solving and critical reading and thinking.
- All students with disabilities who are registered with the Office of Disability Services and choose to take advantage of our test proctoring services will receive accommodations that are flexible, individualized, and confidential.
- All tutors and SI leaders will benefit from a pre-professional instructional experience.

We’re on the web!
www.bsu.edu/learningcenter