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Learning Center Earns National Award

The Ball State University Learning Center has been selected to receive the 2010 National College Learning Center Association/Frank L. Christ Outstanding Learning Center Award for Four-Year Colleges.

The purpose of this prestigious award is to give national recognition to the work done by exceptional learning centers, foster growth and development in the field of academic support services, and extend gratitude to those who contribute to the profession of learning center administration.

The BSU Learning Center, located in North Quad 323, is a unit within University College. The Learning Center provides free academic support services to students in the form of tutoring and Supplemental Instruction study sessions. During the 2009-2010 academic year, 21.49% of the Ball State University

population and 42.8% of freshmen used Learning Center services, the highest number since 2004. The Learning Center conducted 16,859 tutoring sessions, 957 SI study sessions, and served a total of 6,114 students in over 28,030 contact hours.



Jennifer Haley, Jacqueline Harris, and Gary Ritz accept the 2010 Frank Christ/NCLCA Outstanding Learning Center Award at the NCLCA Annual Conference in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The coordinators of the BSU Learning Center, Jacqueline Harris, Jennifer Haley, and Gary Ritz, were honored to accept this award and wish to recognize the exceptional accomplishments of the tutors, Supplemental Instruction leaders, graduate assistants, test proctors, receptionists, and other student staff who work so diligently in the Learning Center to provide academic support to their fellow students.

The coordinators would also like to thank the Ball State faculty, staff, and administration for their continuous support of the Learning Center and its services and programs.

The award was presented at the NCLCA national conference in Charlotte, North Carolina in October.

Learning Center Usage: Fall 2010

Learning Center Tutoring Usage:

Core Desk: 651 students, 3313 tutoring sessions
Math Desk: 598 students, 2581 tutoring sessions
Study Strategies Desk: 199 students, 574 tutoring sessions
Writing Desk: 249 students, 523 tutoring sessions
Testing Center: 155 students, 974 testing sessions

Supplemental Instruction Usage:

1231 students, 6840 SI session visits

Thank you to all of our tutors, Supplemental Instruction leaders, and graduate assistants for your hard work! You continue to make a difference in the academic lives of BSU students.

What does the Learning Center offer?

- Free tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, and a variety of workshops for all BSU students
- The opportunity for students to collaborate with a peer trained in academic support services in a relaxed, informal learning environment

Tutor and SI Leader Superstars

Lauren
Mazur



Mitch
Goshert



"It makes me really happy to see the looks on their faces as they tell me about their As. But I also had a nice lady bake me Snickerdoodles at the end of one semester. It's hard to top that."

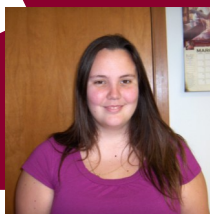
Chris
Moore



Quinlan
Hanson



Jenna
Endres



Senior **Lauren Mazur**, a Supplemental Instruction leader for Dr. Truelove's Psychology 100 course, is enjoying her first year working in the Learning Center. Lauren, a psychology and interpersonal studies major, remembers finding her Psychology 100 course "incredibly difficult," and when she finally mastered it, she had a desire to help other students who also struggled with the course. Coordinator Jennifer Haley notes that Lauren's study sessions regularly draw over 40 students per week, and Lauren has already been awarded SI Leader of the Month for her fantastic efforts at creating supplemental materials and holding interactive, relevant study sessions

for students. Lauren states that "It feels wonderful to know that I'm making a difference." After graduation, Lauren plans to attend graduate school and focus on marriage and family counseling.

Mitch Goshert, a senior majoring in chemistry, has worked as a chemistry tutor since August of 2009. Mitch was initially interested in becoming a tutor to reinforce his own knowledge of the subject matter and to study for the GRE and MCAT, but he soon realized that tutoring was a way to help fellow classmates who felt overwhelmed: "One client came to the Learning Center with no chemistry back-

ground at all. She was very intimidated by the class and was hoping just to pass. She very faithfully attended the tutoring sessions and we would go over a different topic every week, strengthening her understanding of the material . . . she ended up with an A in the class and told me I was a major part of it. It made my day."

Coordinator Jennifer Haley adds that Mitch is always completely booked with clients and handles the workload with professionalism and cheerfulness.

Senior **Chris Moore** has served as a tutor for many different math courses at the Math Desk since the spring semester of 2007. Majoring in math education and German, Chris plans to be a teacher and embarked on his tutoring career to gain instructional experience. He has experienced many moments of success during his four-year tenure as a tutor: "My favorite moments tutoring are when my permanent clients come to the session bragging about how well they did on their tests. It makes me really happy to see the looks

on their faces as they tell me about their As. But I also had a nice lady bake me Snickerdoodles at the end of one semester. It's hard to top that."

After Chris teaches for a few years, he plans to open a bar/coffee shop.

Junior **Quinlan Hanson** has been a tutor for GRE preparation and study strategies for two years. He enjoys helping people and the challenge of explaining concepts in different ways: "I once had an international GRE client who was struggling with

the math section. We had to overcome a language and notation barrier. We started from the very beginning and she did well on her GRE."

Quin majors in biochemistry and is working toward a certificate in biotechnology as well. He plans to pursue a Ph.D. in biochemistry or toxicology and work as a professor and researcher in higher education.

Coordinator Jackie Harris notes that, "Time after time, Quin walks the extra mile for BSU students and the Learning Center."

Senior **Jenna Endres** has been tutoring writing and media law for the Learning Center for three semesters. She chose to become a tutor because she enjoys helping people to learn, and tutoring is giving her a unique and important experience for her future career as a teacher. "I tutor mainly in media law, which is one of the hardest telecommunications classes. I have

had multiple clients come to me with a "D" in the class and leave with a "B." There is no better feeling than knowing that I helped someone."

Coordinator Jackie Harris asserts that Jenna receives excellent feedback from clients. "Jenna is a superior tutor and is always willing to assist in administrative tasks as well in her spare time. Clients are extremely positive about

Jenna's tutoring sessions and many book weekly and bi-weekly appointments."



University College Celebrates 25 Years

In 1985, Ball State University established University College to give students a variety of academic and support services in a single location. On November 5th, 2010, staff and students celebrated University College's 25th anniversary with a reception hosted in the Learning Center.

Staff within Academic Advising were recognized for serving in leadership roles in national organizations and as recipients of awards given by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). The Learning Center was recognized for its Outstanding Learning Center (NCLCA) of the Year Award as well as its national certifications from the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) and National Association for Developmental Education (NADE). Individuals were recognized for serving as executive board members for NCLCA and for leadership certifications by NCLCA.

During the reception, the Dean of University College, Dr. Marilyn Buck, spoke about the unique ability of the different units of University College to successfully provide academic services to students.

President Jo Ann Gora recognized the many accomplishments of University College over the past 25 years, while Dr. Mike Haynes, Associate Dean of University College, closed the reception by recognizing the current and retired employees of the four different units that comprise University College.

University College is an academic unit offering comprehensive programs and services to enhance students' academic success at Ball State University. It is composed of four main units: Academic Advising, Academic Support Services for Student Athletes, Office of Academic Systems, and the Learning Center.

Meet the Alumni: Courtney Jarrett



Courtney with husband Jason Jarrett, who is also a Learning Center alumnus.

“My time at the Learning Center was the most rewarding professional time I’ve ever had.”

Courtney Jarrett was selected as the featured LC alumnus for this issue of *Tutor Talk*. She was a tutor, test proctor, SI leader and GA within the Learning Center. She currently works at Ball State and serves as the Associate Director of Disabled Student Development and as an Affiliate Faculty of Women's and Gender Studies. She has worked in the DSD office for two years and has taught in Women's Studies for three.

What are your current main job responsibilities?

At DSD, I coordinate the support functions for students with disabilities, including note takers, sign language interpreters, readers/scanners, computer assisted real-time notes, and personal care attendants. I create disability awareness activities and programs and serve as the advisor to Disabled Students in Action, the student group serving students with disabilities on campus. I meet with current and prospective students to discuss disability accommodations. I assist the director in supervising graduate assistants and I prepare departmental publications including the website and the newsletter.

For WMNST, I have previously taught WMNST 210, Introduction to Women's Studies on campus and now currently teach it online along with a class I developed called WMNST 310: US Feminisms. These are the first two online classes ever taught by the WMNST program. I also advise Triota, the Women's Studies Honor Society, and Feminists for Action, the feminist student group on campus.

In thinking back to your time in the LC, how did the LC contribute to your life? Career?

The LC gave me both jobs that I had as an undergraduate on campus (SS tutor/test proctor and HIST 150 SI). Those jobs allowed me to learn important skills that I might have not learned anywhere else. I learned how to test proctor for students with disabilities, to tutor and manage my own study skills, and to teach other students about a Western Civilization class and study skills so they could become better students. I also couldn't have gone to graduate school without my assistantship at the Study Strategies desk. I learned how to organize tutoring and test proctoring schedules, contact professors in a professional manner for tests, and evaluate the tutors. My time at the Learning Center was the most rewarding professional time I've ever had.

What are some things you'd like to share with the tutors?

There may be times when you feel as though you aren't making a difference, but just always keep in mind that you are helping your students. As a tutor and test proctor you are assisting them in being successful in college. Also, look for ways that your job at the LC can benefit you. I co-wrote an article with Jackie and presented at several conferences with co-workers during my time at LC.

99.56% of Learning Center clients report that they will use the LC for future courses.

Learning Center Clients Evaluate Tutoring Experiences

For a week every fall semester, clients of the Learning Center are given an evaluation form to complete to give feedback about their tutoring experiences. Information about why the clients seek tutoring, how they found out about the LC, the quality of their tutoring experiences, and suggestions to make the LC better are obtained through this evaluation. During the Fall 2010 semester, 226 clients submitted evaluations.

Why Clients Seek Tutoring

Clients most often responded that they needed answers to specific questions they had about the material (64.16%) and they needed a chance to talk through some of the concepts they've learned and to be quizzed over the material (65.49%).

How Clients Hear About LC Services

Clients' responses fell into these top three categories: they remembered LC information from freshman orientation (48.23%), professor/advisor/coach/RA referrals to the Learning Center (40.71%), or friends/classmates told them about the services (32.74%). Information obtained from this area of the evaluation helps the LC coordinators with the marketing of the LC services.

Feedback about Tutoring Experience

- 98.7% of the clients stated that their tutor was on time and prepared for their session.
- 89.82% of the clients stated their tutor answered questions about the material and engaged them in a discussion about the material.
- 79.65% of the clients felt they could now answer their questions about the material or work the problems on their own.
- 92.48% of the clients stated their tutor made them feel welcome and comfortable.
- 79.2% of the clients felt their tutor was flexible in meeting their needs for the session.

Expectations/Future Usage/Suggestions for the LC

- 96.9% of the clients stated that their tutoring experience met their expectations.
- 98.67% of the clients stated they would recommend the LC to their friends.
- 99.56% of the clients said they would use the LC again in the future for another course.

Clients were also asked to give any suggestions for improvements to the LC.

There were many positive responses about the excellent service of the Learning Center and the tutors. There were a few responses about the noise level and interruptions due to the construction being done in the LC during the fall semester.

Meet the Staff: Office Supervisor Cathy Mills

Cathy Mills has been working in the Learning Center for 18 years, and we all rely on her thorough, cheerful experience! What would we do without her?



The Learning Center is not only one of the best places to work on campus, but also a very significant part of Ball State and an important learning environment for our students. The process of providing this sort of environment starts with our student employees. As a supervisor, it is my responsibility to help student employees understand why they're doing what they're doing, and showing them how each task contributes to the overall mission of the Learning Center. I feel that this will help develop their self-confidence and sense of belonging, because one of the most important things to remember, in order to have a successful Learning Center, is that we must first impart a sense of purpose regarding the work that the students are doing. Understanding why one is

doing something helps to increase motivation. The students will begin to feel a sense of belonging, of accomplishment, when they can see how their work impacts faculty, staff, and other students.

My main responsibilities are managing the Learning Center office area and providing support for the daily operation of the LC, supervising in the collection and compilation of data from the center, and making sure that everything runs smoothly and efficiently. Also, a big part of my job involves managing the payroll process for over 100 LC tutors, SI leaders, and student workers.

I really enjoy the people I work with everyday (coworkers and students). The LC environment requires a lot of teamwork from staff and student workers, and that's exactly what makes the Learning Center successful.

Challenges about the job: The recruiting, hiring, and scheduling process of our student workers plays a crucial part in my responsibilities as a supervisor. The whole process can be challenging at times, but worth it, mostly because of the interactions I have with the students. This interaction with student employees is vital because student employees are team members too, but each individual plays a different role on that team.

Making the commitment to supervising students has been the single most important decision of my career. Working with these emerging professionals/citizens has led me to more self-reflection and self-improvement. I always ask myself, what I can do, as a supervisor, to help ensure good student work performance? The answer to that is to give positive feedback and communicate openly.

"In order to have a successful Learning Center, we must first impart a sense of purpose regarding the work that the students are doing."

Learning Center Annual Report

At the end of the academic year 2009-2010, the LC coordinators created an annual report. This report included summary information on the following topics: client usage for tutoring and SI, recognitions and LC highlights, outreach, professional involvement of the coordinators, tutoring outcomes, tutor training topics, SI summative data, grant updates, and client comments. A comparable report will be generated for the 2010-2011 academic year.

The Annual Report may be obtained from the Learning Center website.

www.bsu.edu/learningcenter

Many of the tutors and SI leaders in the Learning Center are awarded Dean's List honors every semester. Read more about other prestigious awards and honors received by our exceptional student staff.

Student Staff Honors and Awards

Kendra Phillips (Core Desk, Nursing 330 SI leader) was one of 60 student researchers chosen from a national pool of 500 applicants (and one of two chosen from the state of Indiana) to exhibit her research on the problems associated with sexual assault at the Council of Undergraduate Research in Washington, D.C. Kendra also had the opportunity to discuss her research with members of Indiana's congressional delegation, Congressmen Mike Pence and Peter Visclosky and Senator Richard Lugar.

Kendra was also awarded the 2010 Evelyn Reynolds Wible Nursing Scholarship. The scholarship is awarded to senior nursing students who have a primary interest in Theory and Practice in Medical and Surgical Nursing, have at least one full year of schooling remaining, demonstrate scholastic achievement within nursing, and demonstrate financial need.

Recently, **Lauren Mazur** (Core Desk, Psychology 100 SI Leader) had a great leadership opportunity to speak on behalf of the Ball State University Singers on national television with the Today Show's Kathie Lee and Hoda. It was truly a great learning experience to apply some of the speaking skills Lauren acquired from being a Supplemental Instructor.

Andrea Tordi (Core Desk, Chemistry 101 SI Leader) recently studied in Italy for two weeks.

Chelsea Carstens (Core Desk, Physiology 215 SI Leader) received the Presidential Scholarship, was chosen as an Emens Scholar, and received the Rinker Scholarship for studying abroad in Costa Rica. She volunteers in the ER at Ball Memorial Hospital.

Michelle Gross (Core Desk) participated in the EDEL-O study abroad trip where she taught 3rd grade in a British school.

Kayleigh Mohler (Math Desk) was awarded the William Maudames Conner Business Scholarship.

Brianne Woodward (Study Strategies Desk) received the Yuhas Rinker Scholarship for London Centre Study Abroad Program and was recognized as Miss Cardinal Spirit 2010 for the Miss BSU competition. She serves as Co-President of Kappa Delta Pi (International Honor Society).

Vivek Hadley (Math Desk) won a \$1,000 scholarship in November from the Indianapolis Jazz Foundation.

Rosamae Swoape (Core Desk) serves as the 2011 Editor-in-Chief of *Stance: An Award-Winning International Undergraduate Philosophy Journal*; she is President of Phi Sigma Tau (Philosophy Honors Society); she won the Outstanding Senior Award for Religious Studies (2009-2010) and the Outstanding Senior Award for Philosophy (2009-2010), the first student to achieve both of these awards in the same year.

Huicong Xie (Math Desk) is currently involved in cell biology research and was awarded a Chemistry Department scholarship.

Lauren Hamilton (Math Desk) received a scholarship from Somerset CPA in the fall semester.

Congratulations!

Learning Center Moves to AC for Spring Semester, LB for Summer

After a semester of enduring jack-hammers, drills, and other unidentified crashes, booms, and jarring noises in North Quad, the Learning Center moved over Winter Break to the temporary “swing space” on the fourth floor of the Arts and Communications building.

The temporary space features a series of classrooms that work nicely for tutoring and administration. As always, our tutors and clients have adapted seamlessly, and not one word of complaint has been heard.



We peeked at the progress, and although it is difficult to visualize this construction space being transformed into a new and improved Learning Center, we are confident that the contractors will work their magic.

Improvements to the Learning Center include a second entrance/exit, new lighting, ceiling panels, and carpeting. In addition, the space that was formerly known as the “Computer Lab” will become a suite of offices.

Students are encouraged to use the Learning Center services in AC 410 during the remainder of spring semester.

The Learning Center has another move coming up: immediately following finals week, we will be moving to the Letterman Building until the close of 2nd Summer Session, at which time we will move once more into our permanent space in NQ 323. Test proctoring services for students with disabilities will remain in LB 131 until the close of Fall 2011 semester.

Call 285-1006 for more details!



The Learning Center will receive an additional entrance/exit, new ceiling tiles, lighting, and carpet. Our beautiful beams will remain intact!

Staff

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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.

***Those who learn together,
learn best.***

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