

## The Learning Center ANNUAL REPORT (2012-13)

### Executive Summary

The Learning Center (TLC) at CCSU provides academic support services for all students so that they may reach their maximum academic potential. In support of the university's focus on improved student success and increased retention and graduation rates, TLC has expanded and diversified its support services significantly since 2008. Distinct support services offered by TLC staff include, individual and small group academic success coaching; Early Alert counseling and referral; tutoring for mathematics, statistics, philosophy, and psychology by CRLA certified peer tutors; and academic interventions for students on academic probation. TLC also provides leadership for the FYE program, Placement Testing, E-tutoring, on-line Adult Success Coaching, and CRLA tutor certification training for the School of Engineering and Technology, School of Business, TRIO programs, and Community Central.

This report and all supporting reports will be posted on the TLC website by 7/15/2013 at the following link:

<http://www.ccsu.edu/page.cfm?p=16603>.

Reports: Tutoring; The Learning Center Annual Report (2012-13) Executive Summer; Academic Coaching; Blue Devils Advocates Peer Mentoring Program; eTutoring and eCoaching; Early Academic Alert Program.

#### I. Past Year Activity: 2012-13

The number of student visits to TLC has almost doubled since 07/08, from just over seven thousand visits, to thirteen thousand visits in 2011/12. The number of students who took advantage of individual academic coaching has tripled since 2008 from 200 students to 644 students in 11/12 and 570 students in 12/13. TLC served 3,954 individual students during the 2011 academic year.

##### A. Progress in Meeting Annual Goals. Overview of Level of Activity in TLC (Assessment discussed later.)

<b>TLC academic support service:</b>	<b>Academic Year Activity 11/12</b>	<b>Current Academic Year Activity 12/13</b>
Early Academic Alert (See attached 'Academic Coaching' report.)	Alerts submitted by faculty to TLC= 2,008 In-person meetings=189 Email or phone consultations=796	Alerts submitted by faculty to TLC= 2,096 In-person meetings=216 Email or phone consultations=575
Academic Success Coaching (Face to face)	1999 sessions 644 students	2046 sessions 570 students
Academic Success Coaching (on-line)	110 sessions 35 students	189 sessions 49 students
TLC workshop attendance	177 students	64 students
Making the Dean's List	121 students	116 students
Academic Integrity Sessions (1-1)	25 students	29 students
Tutor Lab Visits	6727 visits 1653 students	7109 visits (Best estimate) Unable to determine # of students*
eTutoring sessions	723 sessions 283 students	722 sessions 236 students
Total number of students (excluding students who took placement tests)	3954 STUDENTS	Unable to determine # students*
Placement tests administered	594	656
TLC Presentations/Workshops	138 presentations	93 presentations

\*We estimate that the number of students served and the number of visits was consistent with the numbers in 11/12. However, we are unable to verify this, due to a problem implementing the new data collection system. We are addressing the problem.

Goal	Progress
Identify, purchase and implement a campus wide student retention and early alert software system.	<b>Very little progress.</b> Exploration began of commercially available software. Working with IT, Student Affairs and the Registrar, we identified several products that would facilitate a campus wide retention effort. We concluded, however, that the investment would be premature if the campus was not positioned to work collaboratively to address student success initiatives and coordinated communications. We shared our findings and conclusions with the Student Success Team, and recommended that the members work toward positioning us to address increased collaborations in the future.
Implement swipe card technology for all TLC services.	<p><b>Completed, with adjustments needed:</b> The Learning Center implemented Blue Swipe data collection at multiple locations on 10/1/2012. The front reception area has two swipe units, the Tutoring Center has one welcome station and the conference room has one swipe for small groups such as Dean's List attendance. The Tutoring Center usage has been tracked entirely using Blue Swipe this year. Academic Interventions, Coaching and placement testing have been tracked by hand and with Blue Swipe.</p> <p><i>What we learned</i>  <i>There were +/- 1500 student visits recorded in Blue Swipe that we believe, after comparison with Coaching records, were not accurately categorized. Also, there were many times when the Tutoring Center did not have a dedicated student worker to greet and swipe. We discovered early that, although possible, asking students to self-swipe would result in inaccurate numbers and categorizations. At those times, the student worker at the front desk was responsible for swiping all students entering the LC, answering phones, and answering visitor questions. We theorize that during busy periods, when the student workers were multi-tasking, students who were familiar with the Tutor Center were able to pass by without being recorded.</i></p> <p><b>Action Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Increase Blue Swipe training for the student workers.</b></li> <li>• <b>Staff both workstations during peak traffic times.</b></li> <li>• <b>Submit request to IT to reduce the number of categories, i.e.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>TUTORING instead of tutoring psych, tutoring math, tutoring stats</b></p>
Rebrand and market the Early Academic Warning system. (Potential new name=Early Alert)	<b>Moderate progress, not complete:</b> Teaching faculty received emails asking them to report 'never attended class' prior to the 3 week freeze. The name change will go into effect in the 2013 fall semester.
Replace old website with engaging, useful, cutting edge, and user friendly content.	<b>Complete and ongoing:</b> A new website for The Learning Center was published online. The website delivers timely and useful information about placement testing registration, tutoring schedules and academic coaching interventions. We will continue to make the website more engaging in the upcoming year.
Increase the number of CRLA certified CCSU peer tutors across campus by fully engaging tutor supervisors in the process and providing opportunities for peer tutor participation in TLC Tutor Training programs.	<p><b>Complete and ongoing:</b> Four TRIO tutors and one School of Business Tutor earned CRLA Level I Certification. Several Trio tutors are currently working on the independent portion of the training.</p> <p>Most individuals assigned to supervise tutoring are part-time, temporary staff members or staff members with competing priorities. The supervision and evaluation of tutors for the certification process requires continuity and foundational understanding of tutoring principles.</p> <p><b>Action Plan: Develop concise foundational training materials to facilitate completion of supervisor training</b></p>
Secure accreditation of level III CRLA International Tutor Certification.	<b>Moderate progress, not complete:</b> The cohort of tutors working towards level III certification completed the required activities and projects, but failed to complete their reflection pieces and hand in the documentation for submission

	to CRLA. CRLA asks for examples of student work when a program is submitted for accreditation. This is the second time that a cohort has done most of the work, but didn't provide the coordinator with the final products for submission.
<b>Expand the "circle of care collaboration" initiative to include more partners.</b>	<b>Complete and ongoing:</b> Select faculty and the Edge Scholar program joined the circle of care. The center for student athlete support and CACE continued their participation in the program. In the future the new swipe card technology can be used to share information about students within the circle of care.
<b>Develop, implement and assess the Blue Devils Advocates peer mentoring program.</b>	<b>Fully implemented.</b> Assessment of impact on retention will be completed following the 3 week freeze in September, 2013. A proposal for continued use of the remaining funds has been presented to the Alumni Association. The proposed activities would be used to support the existing FYE Peer Leader program and for recognition of student success. (See Special Initiatives below.)
<b>Provide training, program curriculum, oversight and supervision for the pilot of the School of Business Academic Allies and Advocates (AAA) program.</b>	<b>Fully implemented.</b> The School of Business replicated the project in the spring semester. The Coordinator continued to attend weekly staff meetings to report and participate in on-going staff development activities. (See Special Initiatives below.)
<b>Develop and host a password protected web space for on-line staff development materials.</b>	<b>Complete</b> The password protected web space was created and used during academic coach training. It consolidated training videos, articles and links to helpful web sources. In the future we will use the web space as a way to build foundational knowledge prior to training.

B. Administrative Changes. Summarize any significant changes in budgetary, staffing, and infrastructure conditions in your unit in the past year.

#### **Budgetary:**

Base budget =\$97,400; One-time funds required to meet needs=\$60,000

(Additional funding was secured through a Davis Grant and the CCSU Alumni Association. These funds supported the expansion of eCoaching and the Blue Devils Advocates (peer mentoring) programs respectively.)

NOTE: 95% of our funds are used for personnel (student work, graduate assistants, adjunct faculty, UA)

#### **Staffing:**

The only permanent staff members of TLC are the Director and the secretary. All direct services in TLC are delivered by graduate and undergraduate CCSU students who receive extensive pre-service and in-service training and supervision. This results in significant staff turnover every semester.

The Learning Center's Peer Tutor Training program is authorized by College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) International Tutor Training Program Certification to award our tutors with certification for both Level I (Certified Tutor) and Level II (Advanced Certified Tutor) certificates. It is anticipated that the TLC training program for CRLA Level III (Master Tutor) will be authorized within the next year. Academic Success Coaches receive 30 hours of pre-service training and 20 hours of in-service professional development during the fall semester. The Learning Center employs 50 to 55 students each semester. These students, many of them future teachers and future higher education service providers, gain valuable work experiences.

#### **Infrastructure:**

Soft walls and furniture from the Bursar's Office were repurposed to change the footprint of the Academic Coaching lab. This allowed us to add a coaching station, create a better traffic flow, and increase the privacy for the Academic Coaching program. The Tutor Lab was redesigned to expand space for the Psychology tutors.

### C. TLC Initiatives

<i>Initiative</i>	<i>Evidence of impact</i>																																						
<p><b>FYE Academic Coaching (pilot assignment)</b> In partnership with Professor Pozorski, TLC provided academic success coaching for the following FYE class assignment (taken from the syllabus):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Academic Coaching Certificates</u>: On Monday, September 10, Lauren Eddy and her staff from The Learning Center will visit our class to talk about their academic coaching program. The program is designed to help students understand their strengths and weaknesses by pairing them with an experienced academic coach. Shayne Koplowitz, who will also be meeting with the class, is designing a curriculum with this section's needs in mind. For the first time, we are asking that all FYE students in this section try the coaching program. At the first session, you and your coach will discuss a plan for proceeding. For each meeting with your coach, you will receive a certificate. Turn in your certificates at the end of the semester for a corresponding grade: 4 visits = A; 3 visits = B; 2 visits = C; 1 visit = D. This is worth 15% of your final grade.</li> </ol> <p>There were 17 students enrolled in this FYE section of English 110.</p>	<table> <tr> <th>GPA Fall 2012</th><th>Number of coaching meetings</th></tr> <tr><td>3.76</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>3.73</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>3.68</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>3.6</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>3.48</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>3.2</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>3.14</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>2.99</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>2.97</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>2.66</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>2.34</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>2.22</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2">probation following Fall 2012</td></tr> <tr><td>1.86</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>1.6</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>0.95</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>0.94</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>0.7</td><td>0</td></tr> </table>	GPA Fall 2012	Number of coaching meetings	3.76	4	3.73	5	3.68	5	3.6	4	3.48	4	3.2	2	3.14	6	2.99	4	2.97	1	2.66	4	2.34	2	2.22	3	probation following Fall 2012		1.86	0	1.6	0	0.95	1	0.94	1	0.7	0
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<p><b>Blue Devils Advocates program</b> The Blue Devils Advocate (BDA) initiative sponsored by the CCSU Alumni Association was piloted in the fall semester of 2012. 21 peer mentors were assigned 200 first-year students to guide and support during the first semester at CCSU to smooth the transition from high school to college.</p>	<p>Assessment of program effectiveness will be conducted by after the 3 week freeze date in the fall of 2013. (Initial report posted under reports on the TLC website.)</p>																																						
<p><b>School of Business Academic Ally training program</b> The purpose of the Academic Ally Program is to support student success and address academic achievement gaps. The aim of the program is to assist students with a grade point average (GPA) of 2.0-2.5 to raise their academic standing and enable them to successfully complete their course of study as a Business major. TLC was a significant partner in the development of this program. TLC provided all of the initial training and ongoing professional development for the Coordinator (GA).</p>	<p>Out of the 17 students who participated in the fall, 13 successfully completed the program (76.47%). Successful completion of the program required attendance at 12 out of 14 sessions. After the completion of the program there was a .30765 increase in the mean of GPAs. In the spring 2012 the mean GPAs for this group of students was 2.2771 and after the completion of the program the GPAs rose to a mean of 2.5847. (Supplied by Jordan Lodice, Coordinator, School of Business)</p>																																						
<p><b>Expanded on-line Academic Success Coaching to include students under the age of 25.</b> <i>In the spring semester, 2013 we opened the service to all students on probation, regardless of age. Enrollment in the service doubled to the maximum of 50 students. We will assess the efficacy of on-line coaching with younger, at-risk students at the end of the semester.</i> As we learn more about the impact of on-line success coaching on student success, we will expand the numbers of students invited to participate. As appropriate, we will</p>	<p><i>Summary of academic progress for student who successfully completed the on-line coaching academic probation intervention in spring 2012 and fall 2012:</i> 39 CCSU probationary students completed 3-5 sessions . Of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 36 increased their grade point average (92%)</li> <li>✓ 23 reached good standing (59%)</li> <li>✓ 30 were eligible to return the next semester (77%)</li> <li>✓ 27 were retained and enrolled the next semester, 7 of them were granted another semester of probation based on improvement (3 more are eligible to return in</li> </ul>																																						

be referring students to the service who are taking advantage of on-ground coaching, but who might benefit by adding the on-line component.	good standing) (69%) At the end of spring 2013, 71% of first year students who participated in on-line coaching increased their GPAs. Further exploration is needed to determine if this is a good intervention for first year students.
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D. Other Initiatives and Accomplishments (not mentioned in prior sections):

- Designed and delivered mentor training to Community Central Mentors
- Refined protocols for the Early Alert Program
- Designed and delivered FYE Faculty Development programs in fall and spring
- CRLA presentation proposal accepted for upcoming annual conference
- Added tutoring for Philosophy Department (Logic)
- Tutor Coordinator received national certification as a Supplemental Instruction Supervisor
- Director served as a CCSU representative on the ConnSCU regional remediation committee
- Established and utilized a TLC Facebook account

E. Progress with Assessment.

OIRA consulted with TLC to develop a framework for assessing student services. The resulting framework can be adopted by all student services departments to assess their activities: **Why we implemented the program or program changes?; Conditions under which we implemented or made changes to the program.; What we did; What we learned; How we learned it**

This framework was used to document the evolution of Academic Interventions for students on academic probation since their inception in spring, 2010. Working with the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, we identified the steps we will need to take to do better data collection for future analysis of the effectiveness of the academic interventions. ('Evolution of Academic Interventions for Students on Academic Probation' is posted on TLC website.)

<b>*We are in the process of analyzing what we learned</b>				
	<b><u>WHY &amp; CONDITIONS</u></b>	<b><u>WHAT WE DID</u></b>	<b><u>WHAT WE LEARNED</u></b>	<b><u>HOW WE LEARNED IT</u></b>
<b>Fall, 2012</b>	The Registrar was using the Academic Recovery Plan as documentation for SAP appeals. The Asst/Assoc. Deans required students whose dismissal appeals were granted to participate in one coaching session to develop a plan for success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redesigned and renamed the Academic Success Plan (formerly the Ac. Recovery Plan)</li> <li>• Met and developed success plans with 2<sup>nd</sup> semester probation students</li> </ul> <b>TLC 001 Academic Coaching</b> -by appointment (in person) <b>79 enrolled</b> -by appointment (on-line) <b>17 enrolled</b> <b>TLC 004 Making the Dean's List</b> <b>42 enrolled in 6 sections</b> <b>TLC 002 Jump Start to the Semester</b> <b>12 enrolled</b> <b>TLC003 Smart Start Workshop Bundle</b> <b>2 enrolled</b> <b>TLC 005 Individual TLC Workshop</b> <b>12 enrolled</b>	Fewer individual workshops were needed to accommodate  75% of the students who successfully completed an intervention improved their GPA.	Academic Coaches' Data Tracker  Preliminary analysis of academic transcripts
<b>Spring, 2013</b>	Extension of grant funding for on-line coaching allowed expansion of services to students less than 25 years of age.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased TLC004 from 50 minutes to an hour.</li> <li>• Reduced the number of TLC004 sections.</li> <li>• Reduced the number of workshops (TLC005).</li> <li>• Opened on-line coaching to all probationary students.</li> </ul> <b>TLC 001 Academic Coaching</b> -by appointment (in person) <b>208 enrolled</b> -by appointment (on-line) <b>47 enrolled</b> <b>TLC 004 Making the Dean's List</b> <b>86 enrolled in 8 sections</b> <b>TLC 005 Individual TLC Workshop</b> *Attend only ONE workshop/offered: January 30, February 27, and April 10th) <b>20 enrolled</b>	Students who pass their academic intervention are far more likely to increase their grade point average than those who don't pass the intervention.	*Preliminary data (See below)

## Preliminary data for academic intervention completion rates and change in cumulative GPA (Spring 2013)

### TLC 001 Academic Coaching (on-ground)

GPA Change	Passed	Failed	Withdrew	Overall
Increase	131 (85%)	23 (53%)	n/a	154 (74%)
Decrease	18 (12%)	15 (35%)	n/a	33 (16%)
No change	6 (3%)	5 (12%)	n/a	11 (5%)
Total students	155	43	11	209

Successful intervention completion rate: 74%

### TLC 001 Academic Coaching (on-line)

GPA Change	Passed	Failed	Withdrew	Overall
Increase	25 (86%)	9 (53%)	n/a	34 (73%)
Decrease	4 (14%)	8 (47%)	n/a	12 (26%)
No change	0	0	n/a	0
Total students	29	17	1	47

Successful intervention completion rate: 62%

### TLC 004 Making the Dean's List

GPA Change	Passed	Failed	Withdrew	Overall
Increase	66 (85%)	3 (43%)	n/a	69 (79%)
Decrease	10 (13%)	4 (57%)	n/a	14 (16%)
No change	2 (2%)	0	n/a	2 (2%)
Total students	78	7	2	87

Successful intervention completion rate: 90%

### TLC 005 Individual TLC Workshops

GPA Change	Passed	Failed	Withdrew	Overall
Increase	15 (83%)	1 (50%)	n/a	16 (76%)
Decrease	3 (16%)	1 (50%)	n/a	4 (19%)
No change	0	0	n/a	0
Total students	18	2	1	21

Successful intervention completion rate: 86%

Although it is extremely difficult to isolate the impact of academic support services on increased student academic performance, assessment efforts such as student surveys, preliminary transcript analysis, student use patterns, and analysis of related items from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) have been used to improve and expand the delivery of TLC services. In the 4<sup>th</sup> week of the fall semester of 2012, TLC piloted the implementation of card swipe technology to accurately and consistently capture individual student use of each TLC service and program. This automated data collection will allow us to conduct future analyses that previously could not be conducted. The card swipe technology is connected to Banner, our university student information system, which will allow researchers to link frequency of participation to academic data for better assessment. Card swipe data collection during the pilot academic year proved more complex than anticipated. (See progress toward goals.)

OIRA has created a data base to track probationary students' academic performance over time, and provide relevant data for analysis of the academic intervention program's effectiveness.

## II. Planning for 2013-2014

### A. Goals

- 1) Implement new Academic Coaching Initiative: In partnership with Center for Academic Advising and Career Exploration, deliver specifically designed success coaching to first year students identified as academically at risk and assess the effectiveness.
- 2) Pilot Supplemental Instruction: In partnership with faculty members from either Chemistry or Statistics, pilot Supplemental Instruction for one high-risk course.

- 3) *If approved by the CCSU Alumni Association*, expenditure of the remaining funds from the CCSU Foundation gift would build upon the successes of, and lessons learned from, the initial Blue Devils Advocates (peer mentor) Program that was conducted in the fall semester of 2012. This proposal would allow us to use the remaining funds over two years.

#### **Details for Goal 3:**

Funds will be used to enrich the FYE Peer Leader (mentor) Program by facilitating relationship building between the Peer Leaders and their assigned students, celebrating and promoting first year student success, and a peer leader symposium to increase the quality and the percentage of FYE courses participating in the Peer Leader Program.

**Initiative 1:** Relationship building-*Coffee and conversation*- Mentors meet one-on-one with their assigned students outside of class in the library for conversation and complimentary beverage. The first meeting should occur within the first 5 weeks for discussions about the student's progress, successes, and struggles to date. In the pilot project, this was the effective activity for building relationships with first year students.

**Initiative 2:** Celebration of student success-*Dean's List Convocation* -Perhaps titled "CCSU Alumni Association FYE Academic Honors Convocation", a member or members of the Alumni Association would deliver remarks and present book awards to students who earned the strongest GPA in their first semester. Book awards to the top performing students, to be applied toward their books the following fall semester, would establish an expectation that they will return, thus boosting 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> year retention. Additionally, honoring strong academic performance at the beginning of their college careers shows that the University values academic accomplishment and sets the tone for future efforts. The 1<sup>st</sup> Year Honor Society might also use this venue to invite the honors students to join. If held in a venue like Thorp, parents could be invited. The ceremony would be followed by a reception.

**Initiative 3:** Increasing participation in, and quality of, peer-to-peer mentoring- *Peer Leader Symposium* "The value of mentors". Selected Peer Leaders would present research they conducted in the fall semester about the value of mentoring. All Peer Leaders and FYE faculty would be invited to attend this event. In addition to advancing the scholarship of the Peer Leaders, the presentations could influence FYE faculty to adopt the mentoring project or expand their current work with student Peer Leaders.

#### **B. Collaboration**

Collaborations and partnerships will continue with:

- ✓ The School of Business-Academic Ally Program
- ✓ Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium
- ✓ Department of Psychological Sciences
- ✓ Department of Mathematics
- ✓ School Based Centers
- ✓ TRIO Programs
- ✓ Community Central
- ✓ FYE
- ✓ Center for Advising and Career Exploration
- ✓ Center for Student Athlete Support
- ✓ Department of Modern Languages
- ✓ Student Affairs
- ✓ Office of the Registrar
- ✓ Office of Institutional Research and Assessment
- ✓ Philosophy Department

Anticipated additional partnerships:

- Admissions
- Department of Residence Life
- Chemistry Department
- Reading Department
- Special Education Department

C. Needs.

*Two needs consistently emerge for TLC:*

- 1) the addition of two permanent staff members (an Assistant Director and an Associate Director), and**
- 2) a stable and reliable budget allocation.**

D. Assessment.

TLC intends to continue to improve assessment of programs and services. We are making every effort to accurately assess program effectiveness. Adjustments will be made to more accurately collect student use information with the Blue Swipe technology. We will work closely with OIRA to mine existing data. (See E. Progress with Assessment above.)  
*Submitted by Meg Leake, Director, June 27, 2013 (Collaborators: Beth Spear, Shayne Koplowitz, Elizabeth DeGrandpre, Natalie Ford, and Jordan Lodice)*