

## Executive Summary

### Mission

The mission of Ball State University's Learning Center is to enhance the academic success of Ball State students by providing free peer tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, and workshops covering a variety of academic issues. In addition, the Learning Center models the University's goal of becoming a premier teaching institution by serving as a scholarly pre-professional experience for undergraduates and graduate student employees. Finally, the Learning Center strives to impact the extended university community through faculty development efforts, learning technologies, and outreach programs at other sites.

Our goals are to provide an educational opportunity for each postsecondary student admitted to the university; to develop in each student the skills necessary for the attainment of academic, career, and life goals; to maintain the university's academic standards by providing instruction through peer tutoring, workshops, Supplemental Instruction, and review sessions which pertain to specific classes as well as broader academic skills; to enhance the retention of students; to continue the professional training of coordinators and tutors so that current theories, research, and teaching strategies can be implemented within the program; and to guide students to reach their academic potential while realizing the benefits of academic collaboration.

### Highlights

During the 2011-2012 academic year the Learning Center supported almost 15,000 tutoring visits and over 800 Supplemental Instructions study sessions. The Learning Center coordinators developed a Tutoring Code of Ethics in collaboration with the tutors and the Learning Center Advisory Board. The coordinators were also pleased to present an instructional workshop on the topic of "How to Apply for the NCLCA Outstanding Learning Center Award" at the NCLCA national conference. The coordinators developed an assessment plan that included learning outcomes for tutors and clients as well as Learning Center goals. Finally, the coordinators engaged in grant work, including the development of a full-day career preparation workshop for veterans in collaboration with Hire a Hoosier Vet.

### Tutoring

The tutorial services offered by the Learning Center include appointment-based, walk-in, and residence hall tutoring. Tutors earn national certifications through the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) as they participate in required training activities. Tutors are required to have earned 3.0 GPAs or above, although the average GPA of our tutors is typically above 3.5. They also must have earned an A or B in the courses for which they will tutor, and provide a faculty reference. Majors or minors in the subject area are preferred.

For the 2011-2012 academic year, the Learning Center conducted 14,963 tutoring and testing sessions and served a total of 3,185 students.

*\*Data collection and reporting during the 2011-2012 academic year was incomplete due to circumstances beyond the control of Learning Center coordinators. Therefore, the information in this annual report is not as comprehensive as the report for 2010-2011.*

### Tutoring/Testing Visits and Headcounts

	Visits Fall/Spring	Headcount Fall/Spring
Core Curriculum	2897/2346	587/443
Math	2622/2302	634/541
Study Strategies	679/615	151/125
Writing	686/783	217/175
Testing Services	1100/933	165/147
Totals for Academic Year	Visits: 14,963	Headcount: 3,185

### Supplemental Instruction (SI)

SI is a nationally-recognized program aimed at increasing student retention and improving student performance. The SI program features group study sessions facilitated by undergraduate students who have taken a targeted course and have been trained in proactive learning strategies. The student leaders conduct study sessions two to three times a week throughout the semester. During 2011-2012, 817 study sessions were offered in 23 different courses. A total of 2,181 students attended study sessions for a total of 11,151 contact hours. The average final course grade of those students who attended SI was 2.815 as compared to 2.298 for their cohorts in those courses who did not attend SI.

### SI Visits, Headcount, and Sessions Offered

	Visits (contact hours)	Headcount	Sessions Offered	Average Visits per Student
Fall	7,128	1,456	479	4.73
Spring	4,023	725	338	5.52
Total	11,151	2,181	817	5.13

### Mean Final Course Grades of Students Who Attended SI Compared to Those Who Did Not Attend SI

	SI Students	Non-SI Students
Fall	2.831	2.392
Spring	2.798	2.204
Total	2.815	2.298

## Campus and Community Outreach

### Outreach to BSU Staff and Faculty

**Learning Center Advisory Board** – The Learning Center Advisory Board was created in 2009-2010 to obtain advice and direction on Learning Center issues as well as to communicate Learning Center activities to stakeholders across campus. The board is composed of professional staff members from different areas of campus, faculty members, and students. The board met once and communicated via email during 2011-2012 to discuss items such as online tutoring and a Tutoring Code of Ethics.

**Faculty/Staff Handbook** – A handbook was distributed to all BSU faculty and professional staff during the fall semester. This handbook was designed to help faculty and staff understand the services the Learning Center offers to students and staff. The handbook has detailed information about how to obtain the services and all contact information.

**MITT (Multimedia Integrity Teaching Tool)** - Acts of academic dishonesty are discouraging and stressful for everyone involved. The *Multimedia Integrity Teaching Tool (MITT)* is a proactive, educational program that teaches the value of integrity as well as the disadvantages of academic dishonesty to students. It can be used in conjunction with the Student Academic Ethics Policy. Last year, 25 students completed the MITT through the Learning Center upon faculty referral.

**“Tutor Talk” Newsletter** – The Learning Center staff created the third issue of the newsletter during the spring semester of 2012. The newsletter contained information about Learning Center awards, usage data, tutor and SI leader profiles and honors, relocation, and staff and alumni features. This printed newsletter was sent to a list of BSU professional staff as well as department chairpersons while the electronic copy of the newsletter was distributed to all students, staff, and faculty.

**Grant Support** – The coordinators have worked with several campus partners on various grants. These campus partners include the Office of Disabled Student Development, Veteran's Affairs Office, Department of Chemistry, and College of Sciences and Humanities. See Grants page for details.

**Various Committee Work** – The coordinators have been actively involved in various campus committees including Admissions and Credits, Freshman Learning Council, Campus Council, Faculty Mentorship Program, Guardian Scholars, Academic Assessment and Institutional Research, and Living Learning Communities.

### Outreach to BSU Students and Parents

**Residence Hall Tutoring** – With the support of the Office of Housing and Residence Life, tutors were placed in select Living Learning Communities on campus. A math tutor was placed in LaFollette Hall both semesters to assist students with academic resources. The Learning Center also participated in the training sessions of Academic Peer Mentors, students who are employed by the residence halls to assist students with academic resources.

**Workshops**—During the academic year, the Study Strategies coordinator presented 10 workshops for all BSU students on topics such as note taking skills, test taking skills and preparing for exams. Six additional workshops were offered for PPST preparation. Upon faculty request, in-class presentations were made to students in the Honors College, Nursing, Social Work, and Criminal Justice.

**Orientation Presentations** – During summer orientation for new students as well as for transfer orientation, the staff of the Learning Center make presentations about the services that are offered. This

presentation is given to approximately 200-300 parents and family members for each day during the summer orientation program and for groups of about 20-30 throughout the year for transfer orientation. *The Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI)* is given to all incoming students and provides a snapshot of current study behaviors. The results are utilized by academic advisors as they meet with the matriculating freshmen.

### Outreach to the Muncie Community

**Community Tutor List** – Parents and others in the Muncie community often call the Learning Center requesting the names of student tutors who might be interested in working with them or their children. Because of this demand, each semester a list of tutors who are interested in working with students outside of the university setting is created. When a request is made, the list of tutors and their contact information is provided to the community member.

**Indiana Academy/Burris High School** – The Learning Center has continued to offer its services to students that attend the Indiana Academy and Burris High School. Because of the location of these schools being on BSU's campus, the students are able to utilize the tutoring services just like other students on campus.

**I-STEM Grant** – See Grants page for details.

**Ensuring Success for Students with Disabilities in Indiana Grant** – See Certifications and Grants page for details.

### Professional Development

#### **Publications –**

Harris, J. and May, M. Co-authored a chapter for College Reading and Learning Association's *Handbook for Training Peer Tutors and Mentors*.

#### **Conference Presentations –**

Haley, J., Harris, J., Heggen, A., Ritz, G. “Helping Student Veterans Transition from Boots to Books.” INADE Annual Conference.

Harris, J., May, Mark. “Tutoring Philosophies: Helping Peer Tutors Conceptualize Teaching and Learning Assumptions.” NCLCA Annual Conference.

Haley, J., Harris, J., Ritz, G. “Applying for the NCLCA/Frank L. Christ Outstanding Learning Center Award.” NCLCA Annual Conference.

#### **Courses Taught –**

EDHI 690. “Graduate Seminar for SAAHE.” G. Ritz.

EDRDG 680. “Classroom Reading Diagnosis.” J. Harris.

MATHS 125. “Mathematics and Its Applications.” G. Ritz.

## Tutoring

### Staffing

Approximately 125 students were Learning Center tutors during the 2011-2012 academic year. The tutors were hired through procedures established by Ball State's Career Center and the Learning Center. The baseline grade point average (GPA) for the tutors is 3.0.

### Usage

#### Tutoring Visits and Headcounts

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#### List of Tutor Training Sessions (Fall 2011-Spring 2012)

##### Fall 2011

- "Tutor Toolbox: Strategies for Success"
- "Providing Quality Tutoring for Students with Disabilities: An Overview"
- "ER in the LC: Triage, Intervention, and Other Strategies for the 'Help! I Have a Test Tomorrow' Clients"
- "Maintaining an Ethical Balance While Tutoring"

##### Spring 2012

- "Tutoring Students with Disabilities Roundtable Discussion"
- "How Am I Ever Going to Use This? Integrating Your Learning Center Experience Into Your Resume and Interviews"
- "Online Resources for Tutor and Student Use"



During the spring semester, client evaluations were collected and evaluated. Detailed results are available upon request for further review. In summation:

#### Client Satisfaction Survey – Spring 2012

Number of Clients Surveyed - 236

Statement	% saying "YES"	% saying "NO"	% not answering
Tutoring met my expectations.	97.03%	1.27%	1.69%
I would recommend the Learning Center to my friends.	99.15%	0.85%	0%
I would use the Learning Center in the future for another course.	97.88%	2.12%	0%

## Supplemental Instruction

### Program Description

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a nationally-recognized academic assistance program featuring weekly study group sessions facilitated by undergraduate students who have taken a targeted course and have been trained in proactive learning strategies. These students attend class with the students, then hold study sessions for the course two to three times per week throughout the semester. The SI leaders prepare supplemental materials such as practice tests, visual aids, chapter outlines, and games.

Over the last year, 817 study sessions were offered in 23 different courses. A total of 2,181 students attended study sessions for a total of 11,151 contact hours. The average final course grade of those students who attended SI was 2.815 as compared to 2.298 for their cohorts in those courses who did not attend SI.

### SI Leader Hiring, Training, and Evaluation

SI leaders are most often recommended by the faculty members with whom they will work. Students must have received an "A" in the course and have an overall GPA of 3.0, although most SI leaders have GPAs over 3.5. SI leaders attend a one-day training session before the course begins and then meet periodically throughout the semester for further training. All SI leaders are evaluated once per semester by the coordinator or by a Core Desk graduate assistant.

### Program Assessment and Evaluation

Each semester data is collected and analyzed in an ongoing effort to improve the SI program. The focus of the analysis is twofold: the academic performance of students who attend SI as compared to their cohorts who do not attend (see the charts below), and personal feedback in the form of an electronic survey. The electronic survey is administered to all students in the courses for which SI is offered and addresses such topics as the efficacy, strategies, and availability of the SI leader and the SI program in general.

### Fall 2011 SI Course Offerings and Data

Sections of Courses	Course Enrollment	SI Sessions Offered	Total Number and Percentage of Students Attending	Total Contact Hours	Mean Number of Sessions Attended by Participants	Mean Size of SI Sessions	Mean Final Course Grade of SI Participants	Mean Final Course Grade of Non-SI Participants
Anatomy 201	323	25	112/34.67	570	5.08	22.80	2.929	2.604
Anatomy 201	189	27	90/47.61	364	4.04	13.48	3.022	2.794
Biology 111	184	67	86/46.73	507	5.89	7.56	2.753	1.912
Biology 111	94	40	30/31.91	116	3.86	2.90	2.357	2.163
Chemistry 101	282	40	133/47.16	724	5.44	18.10	2.519	2.157
Chemistry 101	152	38	84/55.26	351	4.17	9.23	2.728	2.755
History 150	433	39	225/51.96	1,347	5.98	34.53	2.882	2.286
History 150	224	37	133/59.37	476	3.57	12.86	2.508	2.213
History 150	77	39	23/29.87	126	5.47	3.23	2.739	2.413
Music History 100	316	18	177/56.01	836	4.72	46.44	3.533	2.369
Nursing 330	96	30	73/76.04	288	3.94	9.60	2.908	2.712
Physiology 215	160	33	55/34.37	230	4.18	6.96	3.297	2.963
Physiology 215	110	6	13/11.81	21	1.61	3.50	2.846	2.730
Psychology 100	369	40	222/60.16	1,172	5.27	29.30	2.616	1.412

### Spring 2012 SI Courses Offerings and Data

Courses	Course Enrollment	SI Sessions Offered	Total Number and Percentage of Students Attending	Total Contact Hours	Mean Number of Sessions Attended by Participants	Mean Size of SI Sessions	Mean Final Course Grade of SI Participants	Mean Final Course Grade of Non-SI Participants
Anatomy 201	329	41	131/39.81	796	6.07	19.41	2.867	2.211
BIO 111	97	37	34/35.05	192	5.64	5.18	2.860	2.351
BIO 111	171	50	47/27.48	161	3.42	3.22	2.829	2.318
BIO 113	167	39	71/42.51	353	4.97	9.05	2.816	2.259
Chemistry 101	97	41	35/36.08	313	8.94	7.63	2.242	2.129
History 150	299	36	115/38.46	551	4.79	15.30	2.640	2.041
Music History 100	265	32	142/53.58	1,000	7.04	31.25	3.370	2.197
Physiology 215	62	24	30/48.38	135	4.50	5.62	2.563	2.440
Psychology 100	262	38	120/45.80	522	4.35	13.73	2.991	1.889

## Certifications

### ***NADE Certification***

The tutoring program within the Learning Center at Ball State University is certified through 2017 by the National Association of Developmental Education (NADE).

The NADE Certification process requires applicants to demonstrate application of theory, use of quality practices as defined by professional research and literature of the field and analysis of baseline and comparative evaluation data to demonstrate the use of continuous and systematic assessment and evaluation.

### ***CRLA Tutor Certification***

The BSU Learning Center's tutor training program is certified through 2014 through the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA).

The purpose of the certification program is twofold: it provides recognition and positive reinforcement for tutors' successful work from an international organization and it also sets an internationally accepted standard of skills and training for tutors.

The training program at BSU involves three levels of tutor training (Level I – Regular, Level II – Advanced, Level III – Master). Each level of training involves 10 hours of training activities and 25 hours of direct tutoring experience.

### ***NCLCA Leadership Certification***

Learning Center Leadership Certification (LCLC) provides individual learning assistance professionals a nationally-recognized credential and set of standards by which to foster their future growth and development.

This certification sponsored by the National College Learning Center Association (NCLCA) provides validation of individuals' expertise in the field of learning assistance through external and objective review.

The program is flexible and designed to meet the different career paths and goals of learning assistance professionals. Besides providing a standard of credentialing and continuing professional development, certification can be used by learning center directors and learning assistance professionals as rewards and incentives for better performance appraisals. It also establishes benchmarks for the attainment of staff members in reports to their institutions.

Jacqueline Harris has earned Level IV certification, Gary Ritz has earned Level III certification, and Jennifer Haley is in the process of certification for Level IV.

## Grants

### Ensuring Success for Students with Disabilities in Indiana Grant

The United States Department of Education funded the final year of this grant, furthering Ball State University's commitment to a quality education for students with disabilities. The grant implements programs to assist faculty and staff who teach and serve students with disabilities, provides assistance to students through having a faculty mentor and additional and enhanced Learning Center support, and by providing materials to secondary schools on the transition to college for students with disabilities.

Jacqueline Harris from the Learning Center, Director of Disabled Student Development Larry Markle, Taiping Ho from the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology and Roger Wessel from the Department of Educational Studies met on a regular basis to keep components of the program progressing smoothly.

The staff of the Learning Center has been involved in this grant by expanding the tutor training program to include best practices for tutoring students with disabilities. Please refer to the list of tutor training sessions in the Tutoring section of this Annual Report for more details.

### Operation Diploma Program

The goals of Operation Diploma are to educate Indiana higher education institutions about the needs of student service members and veterans, to engage them in promising practices related to serving this population, and to generate new knowledge in the process.

The grants are awarded to help create, enhance, and sustain collaborative and creative programs that show promise in supporting student service members and veterans and their families.

Ball State was awarded one of these grants by the Military Family Research Institute at Purdue University. The staff of the Learning Center has been heavily involved this past year in implementing numerous academic support programs for student veterans on Ball State's campus.

Special events during the year included a Veterans Day ceremony and a full-day Hire A Hoosier Vet Career Prep Workshop on April 4<sup>th</sup> in Indianapolis at the National Guard Armory at Stout Airfield. This event brought veterans and service providers together to better prepare veterans with their professions, resumes, and interviewing skills.

The grant was awarded to Beck Hannaford, financial coordinator of the Office of Veterans Affairs.

### ISTEM Program

The Indiana Science Technology Engineering Mathematics grant program is a statewide initiative to help students in the state of Indiana to excel in the areas of science and mathematics and to inspire them to pursue careers in these areas.

For the fifth year in a row, the Learning Center participated in this grant by hiring, training, and evaluating mathematics tutors who were placed in Algebra I classrooms in the Muncie Community School system.

The Ball State tutors were placed in classrooms with high school freshmen students who did not score well on the math portion of the state's ISTEP exam. Tutors worked one-on-one with these students on developmental math materials supplied by the Muncie Community School system. Tutors also talked about their college experiences and tried to inspire the students with whom they worked to go to college. There are typically eight to ten tutors from various majors placed into the Muncie schools each semester.

### National Science Foundation Grant (awarded through the Department of Chemistry)

The National Science Foundation Grant was awarded to the Department of Chemistry in 2011. The Department of Chemistry saw a need for the development of students' skills in the mathematics calculus series. The Learning Center worked in collaboration with the Department of Chemistry to offer weekly review sessions in MATHS 165 and 166 (Calculus I and II). Learning Center tutors served as review session leaders. Sessions were held twice a week during the Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 semesters. The Learning Center coordinators are appreciative of this grant and the cooperation of the staff of Department of Chemistry in helping to fund these sessions.

## Student Feedback

“I liked that she conveyed the information in an easier to understand format. She talked slower than the professor, and went more into depth on different subjects.”

“She explained the material in a manner in which I could understand better.”

“She was SO helpful. Rachel went beyond my expectations. She really took it to a new level.”

“I felt that he explained the material very well. It was easy to understand.”

“Charlie wrote out the steps to solve the problems instead of just showing us, he explained what was happening step by step.”

“She was very energetic and informational. She was passionate about teaching/helping us.”

“He simplified information learned in lecture, which helped me understand the material better. The repetition helped me remember it also.”

“I liked going over the potential test topics before the tests. It really helped me to know what to study exactly and what to prepare for the test.”

“Patrick provided outlines and handouts, and then he walked us through them. He reinforced concepts, explained things in ways that I could understand, and was very considerate to my questions.”

“Lauren's personality really made it fun. She was very nice and easy to approach. Also, the worksheets she made up and handed out were very helpful!”

“He explained the material at a level students can understand.”

“Very interactive, she tries to get everyone to talk. Knows her info and very helpful.”

“She answered any and all questions that I had.”

“He went over in more detail things that weren't necessarily covered in class.”