Faculty/Staff Handbook

LEARNING CENTER

COLLABORATE + LEARN

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

www.bsu.edu/learningcenter

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The Learning Center wants its programs and services to be accessible to all people with disabilities. For information on access, adaptations, or accommodations, please contact us in person or by mail or call the Office of Disability Services at 765-285–5293 or TTY users only 765-285–2206.

The information presented here, correct at the time of publication, is subject to change. Ball State University practices equal opportunity in education and employment and is strongly and actively committed to diversity within its community.

LEARNING CENTER STATEMENTS

Mission:

The mission of University College'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 serves as a scholarly pre-professional experience for undergraduate and graduate student employees. Finally, the Center strives to impact the extended university community through faculty development efforts, learning technologies, and outreach programs at other sites.

Learning Center Philosophy:

Tutoring provides an opportunity for students to study for a course and to develop study skills in a relaxed, informal learning environment with a peer who has been trained in academic assistance. Students often use the Learning Center to get help with a specific course in an individualized or small group setting; to improve critical thinking skills; to increase background knowledge in many subjects; to improve a grade in a class; to learn time management, note-taking, test-taking, and other skills; and to improve writing and math skills.

The Learning Center strives to change students' perceptions of academic assistance as a resource exclusively tailored for those in academic trouble. Rather, the Learning Center takes a broader approach. We value collaborative learning and believe that those who learn together, learn best. Thus, there is no negative stigma to seeking academic support services; often our clientele includes highly-motivated students who are desirous of a more intimate setting in which to review and discuss course material.

Syllabus Statement:

When preparing your syllabus, please consider including the following information about the Learning Center:

The Learning Center offers free tutoring for courses in the science and humanities area, a variety of math and business courses, any writing task or foreign language courses, and study skills such as time management, test taking, and effective textbook reading. Call (765) 285-1006 or visit NQ 350 to make an appointment to meet with a tutor. Tutoring is available one-on-one or in small groups.

REFERENCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Location of the Learning Center:

The Learning Center is located in North Quad, Room NQ 350. North Quad is located on the corner of McKinley and Riverside Avenues.

Learning Center Contact Information:

Learning Center
General Phone: (765) 285 - 1006

Science & Humanities Desk/Supplemental Instruction (SI)
Desk Phone: (765) 285 - 3776 Coordinator Phone: (765) 285 - 1008

Math & Business Desk
Desk Phone: (765) 285 - 3780 Coordinator Phone: (765) 285 - 5497

Success Strategies Desk
Desk Phone: (765) 285 - 3779 Coordinator Phone: (765) 285 - 8107

Writing & Languages Desk
Desk Phone: (765) 285 - 3778 Coordinator Phone: (765) 285 - 8107

Academic Year Hours:

Monday – Thursday: 9 am – 8 pm
Friday: 9 am – 12 pm

Summer Hours:

Monday – Thursday: 12 pm – 4 pm
Course offerings and tutoring are limited during the summer. Please call ahead to see if a tutor is available.

Website:

www.bsu.edu/learningcenter

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Learning Center is part of Ball State's University College which offers student-centered programs and services that will help students succeed in college and beyond. In addition to the Learning Center, University College includes the following:

Freshman Advising

Freshman academic advisors offer personalized, one-on-one support in areas such as course selection, choice of major, college transition issues and referral to other support services (see page 15). For more information on the academic advising center, visit the website www.bsu.edu/advising.

University Core Curriculum

The University Core Curriculum is a required component of all undergraduate degrees. The spirit of the University Core Curriculum emerges from the kinds of intellectual attitudes the university strives to develop in students. The principle purpose of the University Core Curriculum is to enable students to live rich, satisfying lives and to undertake the broad responsibilities of citizenship in a free society. For more information, visit the website at www.bsu.edu/CoreCurriculum.

Student Athlete Support Services

Provides support and resources to help student athletes succeed in the classroom (see page 16). For more information, visit the website at www.bsu.edu/SASS.

Academic Systems

Oversees the undergraduate and graduate catalogs, compiles the schedule of classes, and is responsible for DegreeWorks. For more information, visit the website at www.bsu.edu/academicsystems.

Writing Proficiency Program

This program is committed to providing appropriate assessment of undergraduate student writing. Students will receive credit for this graduation requirement through completion of either WPP 392 (Writing Proficiency Exam) or WPP 393 (Writing Proficiency Course). For more information, visit the website at www.bsu.edu/writingproficiency.

NADE

In 2007, the Learning Center received national recognition as the first four-year recipient of the tutoring program certification award granted by the National Association for Developmental Education. The certification has since been reveiwed and approved through 2017.

CRLA

The Learning Center certifies its tutors through the College Reading & Learning Association (CRLA) International Tutor Certification Program. Level 1 (Regular), Level 2 (Advanced) and Level 3 (Master) certificates are awarded as tutors complete training activities and acquire student contact hours. This certification is renewed every five years.

NCLCA

The mission of the National College Learning Center Association (NCLCA) is to support learning assistance professionals as they develop and maintain learning centers, programs, and services to enhance student learning at the postsecondary level. The coordinators are members of NCLCA and have presented at numerous conferences and served on the executive board. In 2010, Ball State's Learning Center was awarded the NCLCA Frank Christ Outstanding Learning Center for four year universities. NCLCA offers Learning Center Leadership Certification to learning assistance professionals who have met specific standards. Learning Center coordinators have earned Level III and Level IV certifications.

Tutoring

The Science & Humanities Desk provides tutoring for all of the subject areas listed below (please call the Science & Humanities Desk for specific course numbers). Tutoring is available at the Science & Humanities Desk by appointment only. Permanent weekly appointments are available so a student can meet with the same tutor in the same time slot each week throughout the semester.

Anatomy
Astronomy
Biology
Chemistry
Criminal Justice and Criminology
Exercise Science
Geography
Geology
History
Music History
Music Theory
Nursing
Physics
Physiology
Psychology
Religious Studies

If you have any further questions about the Science & Humanities Desk, please call (765) 285-3776.

Tutoring

Tutoring is provided in many of the beginning level courses in the areas of math and business. Tutoring is available in one-on-one and group settings. A student in an upper level course in any of these areas should call the Math & Business Desk to see if help is available. Because of the large tutoring staff, there may be a tutor who has been successful in that course and could help the student.

Tutoring is available at the Math & Business Desk by appointment or by walking in. Walk-in hours are limited and typically offered during the afternoon busy periods. Students should call to make appointments to ensure a tutor will be available. Permanent weekly appointments are also available so a student can meet with the same tutor in the same time slot each week throughout the semester.

Computer Based Assignments

If a student has an assignment that requires knowledge about a computer program, the Math & Business Desk may have tutors to help. These types of assignments may include developing web pages, using Powerpoint, Blackboard, or working with other computer programs.

Review Sessions/Workshops

The Math & Business Desk will offer periodic review sessions and workshops for some math courses. These may include weekly review sessions for specific math courses or Supplemental Instruction (SI) review sessions. These review sessions/workshops are advertised each semester based on what is being offered.

If you have any further questions about the Math & Business Desk, please call (765) 285-3780.

Tutoring

The Writing & Languages Desk is available to assist students with foreign language tutoring and any written assignment. Tutoring may be in the English courses, but it extends to all coursework. Tutors are also available to help students construct presentations and speeches.

As students advance in their college classes, writing tutors can assist with preparation for the Writing Proficiency Exam and offer suggestions for writing a résumé. Students can attend tutoring during any phase of the writing process. From brainstorming topics to reviewing final papers, tutors are available to respond to the students' work:

- Brainstorming and outlining
- Organization
- Grammar and mechanics
- Library research skills
- Speeches and presentations
- Citations

Course areas for tutoring include:

Chinese
French
German
Greek
Japanese
Latin
Spanish
English
Classical Culture
Communication
Journalism
Telecommunications

If you have any further questions about the Writing & Languages Desk, please call (765) 285-3778.

Tutoring

The Success Strategies area helps students build skills and habits for academic success. This area offers specific help in strategies that can be generalized across many courses within the curriculum. Common topics include:

- Time management
- Note taking
- Test taking
- Reading comprehension
- Concentration and memory skills
- Reading rate improvement

Within the parameters of test preparation, this area offers assistance to students preparing to take some standardized exams related to their academic pursuits.

At the Success Strategies Desk, a student may take a self-survey entitled the Learning and Success Strategies Inventory (LASSI). Students receive feedback on their scores that reflect study skills they are utilizing in college. Students can then look at the subscale results and take action to improve their study habits. This exercise provides insight for the students, and the tutors can recommend improvement for weak study skill areas. The LASSI is always available to students at the Success Strategies Desk.

If you have any further questions about the Success Strategies Desk, please call (765) 285-3779.

SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION (SI)

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a learning enhancement program for students who voluntarily seek assistance in historically difficult courses. Through this program, a student who has recently received an A or B in the course undergoes SI leader training and is assigned to attend the course in order to model effective student practices. The SI leader then schedules three study sessions per week. The SI sessions provide an opportunity for discussion and questions pertaining to the material covered in the course.

During these sessions, the SI leader will use interactive learning strategies, which encourage involvement, comprehension, synthesis, cognitive monitoring, and higher reasoning skills. In addition, the SI leader will incorporate demonstrations and effective studying techniques to assist the student in understanding the material and successfully completing the course and in transferring study strategies to future courses.

Are you interested in having an SI leader in your course?

Consider the following:

- SI is typically best attended in courses in which the professor quizzes or tests frequently and/or requires assignments/projects frequently throughout the semester.
- SI is typically not well attended in courses in which the professor determines the final grade from two or three graded exams or projects.
- SI is typically well attended in large lecture classes.
- SI is typically not well attended in classes of 40 or fewer students.
- SI is typically well attended in courses which have at least a 25% DFW rate.

If you are interested in having an SI leader in one of your courses, please call (765) 285-1008.

WORKSHOPS

Workshops are conducted by LC coordinators and tutors each semester for all Ball State students. They focus mostly on developing study skills that will generalize throughout the curriculum. Common topics discussed include time management, note taking, learning styles, reading rate and comprehension, and test preparation. Frequently, some specialized workshops are offered.

The workshops are offered at various times and days. Please see the current online schedule. If student groups make requests for workshops, we first try to fit them into our existing schedule.

Although changing study behaviors takes time and is beyond the scope of a workshop, tips can be given in a workshop that can be meaningful to students. Students are encouraged to engage in the new ideas and strategies that are offered in the workshops and then discuss them one-on-one with a tutor in the Learning Center. Through the application of strategies over time, study habits can change and efficiency can be improved.

Check the Learning Center website for semester offerings

http://www.bsu.edu/learningcenter

TEST ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with disabilities should first contact the office of Disability Services, have the appropriate documentation reviewed, and receive eligibility for accommodations through that office. The Learning Center is a service available to all Ball State students, and certainly an area that provides support for students with disabilities. The most common accommodation that occurs is to provide extra time to students in an alternative location from the classroom. Faculty members can work out appropriate arrangements with the students who are in compliance with the student's accommodation letter. The Learning Center can also serve as an optional site for testing.

When the student gives a faculty member a letter from DS, it should have a page attached to it which explains some of the procedures for test accommodations in the Learning Center. It is the responsibility of the student to set the appointment for the exam and to discuss the arrangements with the faculty members. Faculty members are asked to provide the test a day or two in advance. Please do not give the test to the students to act as couriers. After the test has been administered, a Learning Center representative will walk the sealed test back to the departmental secretary. The person who accepts the test will sign a receipt acknowledging that it is now in the office. This way, if there are questions regarding the location of the test, we can track it. If you have questions pertaining to the procedures for students with disabilities, please call:

*Disability Services (765) 285-5293

* Success Strategies Desk (765) 285-3779

* Success Strategies Coordinator (765) 285-8107

For more information on the office of Disability Services
visit the website www.bsu.edu/disabilityservices

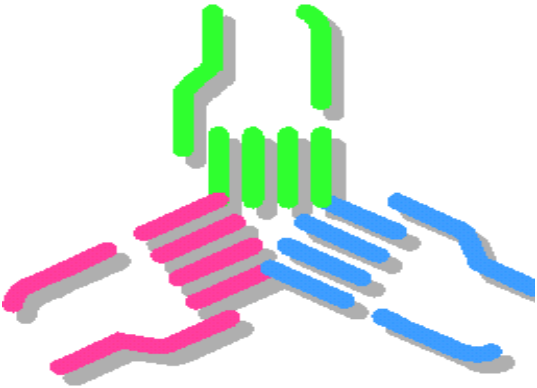
CAN WE OFFER MORE SUPPORT TO YOU?

Here are some ways we are currently interacting with faculty members.

In-class presentations: A Learning Center representative can come into a class and give a brief description of LC services and explain how they relate to the class. Better yet, some faculty members like having the Learning Center orientation occur in North Quad. Touring the Learning Center gives the students a chance to experience the learning environment. At this time, appointments can also be set.

Faculty office hours: Some faculty members hold office hours in the Learning Center. Doing so is a great way to demonstrate support for the center's activities.

Hiring tutors: The Learning Center coordinators welcome faculty referrals for tutoring positions. Additionally, if your students are struggling with a certain aspect of the course (such as written assignments), it is possible to discuss this with a coordinator and develop a plan. For example, when requests have been made for a specific class, the coordinators have worked with the faculty members to hire tutors to meet the request.



Major/Minor Coordinator

Selecting a college major is definitely an important decision, but it's not something students have to decide before they get to college. In fact, there are some really good reasons to wait. The first year of college is a great time to explore options and learn about different areas of study and careers.

Working with the Academic Major/Minor Coordinator, students are helped at every stage, with every decision, to help make the right choices. Whether students have no idea what major to choose or whether they have so many interests it's hard to pick just one or two, the Academic Major/Minor Coordinator will help determine interests, goals, and talents of students and help them to learn more about themselves. The assessments used will provide feedback on important factors such as academic strengths, student values and interests, and the fields that might best match these areas. Students will also explore the ideal combination of all the choices of the university's 150 majors and pre-professional programs. Students can set up an appointment with our Academic Major/Minor Coordinator by calling (765) 285-1161.

Freshman Advising

The Academic Advising Center is located on the third floor of North Quad (NQ 339). Students admitted into the Honors College are assigned an Honors Advisor. Honors Advising is located in the Ball Honors House (BA), room 104. Both advising centers are open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The hours during the summer are 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. More information about advising can be found at www.bsu.edu/advising.

When a student has completed 30 or more credits and has declared a major, he/she will be assigned to a faculty advisor in his/her major. If the student has two or more majors, he/she will select the department from which advising will take place.

Student Athlete Support Services

Student Athlete Support Services provides a welcoming, confidential environment that encourages students throughout their academic careers, and contributes to their intellectual, personal, and social development toward the completion of a BSU degree and preparation for life. Through individual monitoring and academic counseling, workshops and study table participation, student-athletes are challenged to become pro-active, to develop time-management and study strategies, and to stretch their individual sense of responsibility and maturity. Student-athlete needs which affect academic performance such as transition-to-college issues, identification of goals, development of academic plans, enrichment of study skills, and ownership of personal, academic, and social responsibility are addressed by the staff.

Student Athlete Support Services provides coordination with University programs, collaborating with them to provide programming, and encourage the use of services to promote student success.

Student Athlete Support Services office is located in North Quad room 351. Office hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the academic year and 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. during the summer. The office phone number is (765) 285-5852. More information can be found at www.bsu.edu/SASS.

How is a Student Referred for Tutoring?

Faculty members are great referral sources for the Learning Center. One effective way to refer students is to include Learning Center information on the syllabi (see page 3).

If there are students who you think could use the services of the Learning Center, encourage them to come to NQ 350, or call (765) 285-1006, and set an appointment. Walk-in appointments are frequently available in the Math and Writing areas, but to be assured of an appointment, planning ahead is best.

Obtaining an appointment at the Learning Center is a simple process. Students may either call the Learning Center at (765) 285-1006 or visit NQ 350 to make an appointment. Appointments begin at the top of each hour and conclude in fifty minutes. In many cases, students can make "standing" or permanent appointments, thereby ensuring that they will meet with the same tutor on the same day at the same time each week for the duration of the semester (or until they decide to terminate tutoring).

The Writing & Languages Desk and Math & Business Desk also have walk-in tutoring available, but students are always encouraged to call in advance to make an appointment.

Students are asked to arrange for the appointments themselves, rather than having a professor, coach, advisor, or parent make the appointments for them.

If students have questions about what will be expected of them during the tutoring session, please refer them to the website at www.bsu.edu/learningcenter.

WHAT TUTORS WILL NOT DO

Tutors Will Not

Complete Students' Homework - Students will need to have attempted their homework assignments before coming to tutoring, making notes of the concepts with which they are struggling. Then, the students and tutors can review these concepts and work through similar problems.

Rescue the Students - Nothing takes the place of consistent hard work by the students throughout the semester. If students fail to do this, showing up for tutoring a week before final exams will not help. Tutors cannot help students recover from a semester of poor preparation. Students should come to tutoring at the first sign of problems. Waiting will only get them further behind.

Take Responsibility of Students' Learning - Tutors can help the students learn, but they are not responsible for their learning or written work. Students will have to attend class regularly, participate in class, do the homework assignments, read the textbook, and develop a relationship with the instructor.

Have All the Answers to Every Question - Learning Center tutors are well trained and knowledgeable about the subject they tutor, but they cannot be expected to know everything. However, students CAN expect them to model the steps a successful student would use to find solutions. If questions cannot be answered, the tutors encourage students to contact the instructor of the class.

HOW TO REFER A STUDENT TO BE A TUTOR

The Learning Center coordinators frequently hire tutors in all subject areas. Students must have overall GPAs of 3.0 or above and have received an "A" or "B" in the course(s) for which they wish to tutor. The average GPAs of the tutors is above 3.5. Majors or minors in the subject areas are preferred.

All positions are posted through the Career Center. Students who are interested in becoming a tutor should visit the Career Center online (http://cms.bsu.edu/About/AdministrativeOffices/CareerCenter.aspx) and go to the Cardinal Career Link to see if the position for which they are qualified is currently posted. They must then visit the Career Center (LU 220) to obtain a referral slip for that position. A referral slip, official transcript, and a completed Learning Center application are required before a coordinator will arrange for an interview.

Faculty are encouraged to refer high-achieving students for these positions. Coordinators often request referrals from faculty members when attempting to recruit tutors.

A position as a tutor offers many advantages, such as a nationally-recognized certification, a pre-professional experience, and the opportunity to make a difference in the academic lives of fellow students.