

Tutor Talk

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

THE LEARNING CENTER

COLLABORATE + LEARN

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National Recognition for LC at NADE

"Helping underprepared students prepare, prepared students advance, advanced students excel" is the motto of the National Association for Developmental Education.

NADE focuses on the academic success of students by providing professional development, supporting student learning, providing public leadership, disseminating exemplary models of practice, coordinating efforts with other organizations, facilitating communication among developmental education professionals, and anticipating trends.

One way in which the organization promotes these goals is through a high-level assessment of programs which can lead to certification of those programs.

The Ball State Learning Center was the first program in the nation to receive NADE certification for its

Tutoring Services Program in 2000. In March 2010, at the national conference, Ball State received two additional recognitions. The first acknowledgement was for being a "Certification Pioneer," based on the initial certification. The second was for "Continued Certification for its Tutoring Services Program." This was the result of work the LC Coordinators did over the last year. They submitted documentation, evaluations, and self-assessments in support of the programs and services the Learning Center has in place.

The BSU Learning Center's tutoring program is one of three programs in the country that has achieved recertification. This certification extends from the present time to 2017.



Jacqueline Harris (right) received recognition for meritorious service. Dr. Harris served on the original NADE Certification Council, a group charged with developing standards and best practices. NADE representative Linda Thompson is pictured at left.

Learning Center Usage: Fall 2009

Do students really use the Learning Center? You decide!

Fall 2009 statistics:

- 2,161 students used tutoring services for a total of 8,878 tutoring sessions.
- 1,150 students attended

Supplemental Instruction study sessions for a total of 5,670 contact hours.

- 153 students with disabilities used the testing services in the Learning Center for a total of 947 administered tests.

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

Elizabeth
Wallis



Sophomore **Elizabeth Wallis**, a Special Education Intense Interventions major, has been a Study Strategies tutor for three semesters. Liz is very skilled at “balancing friendly support with sound instructional strategies while maintaining a professional demeanor,” notes coordinator Jacqueline Harris.

Erin
Loch



Elizabeth excels in helping overwhelmed students to gain confidence: “I love when I run into past clients who tell me they feel so much better about everything. High expectations are contagious; sharing your confidence and faith

in someone makes all the difference.”

Elizabeth plans to teach in a school that specializes in severe disabilities before moving on to graduate school.

Erin Loch, a senior majoring in English studies, has worked as a Writing tutor since January 2009. Erin frequently shows initiative by going “above and beyond with her clients,” according to Harris. Erin notes that “while working at the Writing Desk, I have really enjoyed having the opportunity to work with international students because of my interest in ESL

education and my future English Teaching Assistantship in Germany. I feel I have been able to use what I have learned in my ESL classes and here in the Learning Center, and I have learned even more by working directly with students.”

Erin appreciates the positive feedback she receives from students she has helped: “I always feel a sense of accomplishment . . . it is nice to know that I have helped others accomplish their goals.”

Erin recently received a Fulbright grant to teach English in Germany for ten months.

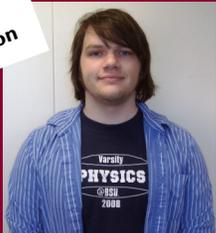
“High expectations are contagious; sharing your confidence and faith in someone makes all the difference.”
~Elizabeth Wallis

Evan Wilson sums up his desire to be a tutor this way: “A job doing math and physics is way better than a job *not* doing math and Physics.” Wilson, a senior majoring in Physics and Nanoscience, also notes that the satisfaction he derives from helping students is rewarding: “I have several clients who started coming in weekly in ‘panic-mode,’ but now at the end of the semester they are getting A’s and B’s on tests. I always feel good about that.”

Coordinator Gary Ritz reflects on Evan’s accomplishments: “Evan has been a key member to the team of tutors at the Learning Center Math Desk. He has worked as a tutor since the fall of 2007 including several summers. He has been the main undergraduate tutor in the area of tutoring Physics, with a strong demand for his services. He has numerous permanent clients each semester because of his outstanding knowledge of the material, patience in communicating the material, and the strong ability to make his clients comfortable during sessions. He also takes initiative to continue to

learn new material in order to help clients in new courses. During his time at the Learning Center, he has helped hundreds of clients and all have expressed their gratitude for the tutoring ability that Evan possesses. He will be truly missed at the Math Desk as he graduates this spring to move on to continue his education in the area of Physics.” Evan plans to pursue a Ph.D. in Physics.

Evan
Wilson



Geneva Gentile has been a tutor in the incredibly high-demand area of Nursing for two years. A senior majoring in Nursing, Geneva serves as a tutor of Chemistry, Anatomy, Physiology, Biology, Health Science, and upper-level Nursing courses. Her latest challenge has been as a Supplemental Instruction leader for Nursing 330.

a test, pass a class, or just feel good that they’re doing great, I feel successful! It feels amazing that as a tutor and SI leader, I can help students to achieve their goals.”

Coordinator Jennifer Haley adds that “Geneva has served as a shining example of a peer tutor: she encourages the students to participate in the sessions, she uses active learning techniques, and she has a wonderful way of connecting with each individual

learner’s style. She has helped countless students through tough courses they may otherwise have failed. Her cheerful, upbeat personality and the amazing depth of her knowledge inspire and motivate even the most discouraged student.”

Geneva graduates this spring and plans to begin her nursing career in Chicago.

Geneva
Gentile



Faculty Mentorship Program



Grant recipients (left to right): Roger Wessel, Jacqueline Harris, Larry Markle, Taiping Ho

Realizing that engagement with faculty is a key to student success and that the transition to college can be especially difficult for students with disabilities, Ball State faculty and

staff developed the Faculty Mentorship Program (FMP) for students with disabilities.

The goal of the FMP is to enhance the learning experience for students with disabilities by assigning faculty mentors to each student participating in the program.

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 meet with students on a regular basis and

assist students in dealing with the complexities of the academic experience at the university. This one-on-one involvement with faculty members gives students a sense of belonging to the university community and a better understanding of the academic expectations.

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.

This program is sponsored by a grant from the US Department of Education and awarded to Ball State University through the Office of Disabled Student Development.

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 grant program seeks to enrich the efforts of student veterans' organizations across the state as

they work to improve support for student service members and veterans.

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.

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

Operation Diploma seeks to create, enhance, support, and sustain programs from student service members and veterans.

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.

The Learning Center works with this grant in hiring, training, and evaluating mathematics tutors to be placed in Algebra I classrooms in

the Muncie Community School system.

The Ball State tutors are placed in classrooms with high school freshmen students who have not scored well on the math portion of the state's ISTEP exam. Tutors work one-on-one with these students on developmental math materials supplied by the Muncie Community School system. Tutors also talk

about their college experiences and try to inspire the students with whom they work to go to college. There are typically eight to ten tutors from various majors placed into the Muncie schools each semester.



Learning Center Awards



The Ball State Learning Center was recently awarded with re-certification of its tutoring and tutor training programs. The Learning Center was honored by NADE as a pioneer in the field of learning assistance.



Learning Center tutoring coordinators (from left): Jennifer Haley, Jacqueline Harris, and Gary Ritz

NADE Certification

The Learning Center at Ball State University was recently awarded a continuing certification by NADE (National Association of Developmental Education) at its recent national convention in Columbus, Ohio.

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.

Ball State's Learning Center, the first in the country to be certified in 1999, is also the first to be re-certified for its tutoring services.

CRLA Tutor Training Certification

This year the BSU Learning Center was awarded continued certification for its tutor training program through CRLA (College Reading and Learning Association.)

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.

The Learning Center was awarded a five year certification for all three levels of tutor training.

NCLCA Leadership Certification

LCLC (Learning Center Leadership Certification) 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 NCLCA (National College Learning Center Association) 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 and as part of benchmarking the attainment of staff members in reports to their institutions.

Gary Ritz, a BSU Learning Center coordinator, was recently awarded a Level III certification. Jacqueline Harris and Jennifer Haley are in the process of certification for Level IV.

Professional Staff Publications

Jacqueline Harris was involved in three long-term research collaborations that resulted in three co-authored journal articles:

- “SI Plus: A Program Description and Analysis of Student Feedback” in *The Learning Assistance Review* with **Courtney Jarrett** (Assistant Director of Disabled Student Development)

- “The Faculty Mentorship Program” in *Advising Students with Disabilities: Striving for Universal Success* with **Larry Markle** (Director of Disabled Student Development) and **Taipng Ho** (Professor in the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology)
- “English Camp: A Language Immersion Program in Thailand” in *The Learning*

Assistance Review with **Kris Rugsaken** (TC Advising Center Coordinator)

Jennifer Haley recently authored “Campus Visit to the Learning Center at Ball State University” in the *NCLCA Newsletter* Winter 2010 issue.

Learning Center staff published articles on such diverse topics as advising students with disabilities, language immersion programs, and descriptions of the BSU Learning Center. Conference presentations included a pre-conference institute designed to facilitate a peer review program created by the Learning Center staff and colleagues from different institutions.

Professional Staff Presentations

The Learning Center coordinators attend many national conferences and have presented on issues that relate to the center. Here is a list of presentations given this past year:

- **Jacqueline Harris, Jennifer Haley and Gary Ritz** were co-presenters at a pre-conference session at NCLCA annual conference, “Learning Center Peer Review Process”
- **Jacqueline Harris** was a presenter/mentor at NCLCA’s Summer Institute, “Develop a Plan with NCLCA Past Presidents”
- **Jacqueline Harris** was a co-presenter with Mark May at NCLCA annual conference in Denver, “Arête: Striving for Excellence in the Climb Ahead”
- **Jacqueline Harris** was a co-presenter with Larry Markle and BSU Learning Center Graduate Assistants (Shawna Hayes and David Adams) at NCLCA annual conference, “Assisting Students with Disabilities Ascend to the Summit”
- **Jacqueline Harris** presented “Implementing a Faculty Mentorship Program” at FYE (First Year Experience) National Conference on Students in Transition, Salt Lake City and a poster session on this topic at AHEAD (Association on Higher Education and Disability) in Louisville.

Learning Center Advisory Board

Learning Center coordinators Jacqueline Harris, Gary Ritz, and Jennifer Haley formed a Learning Center Advisory Board consisting of faculty, staff, and students to provide counsel and advise the coordinators on ways to increase the impact of services, prioritize programs, and develop Learning Center goals. The board is also a vehicle for marketing the Learning Center and its programs and has served to strengthen relationships with key Learning Center stakeholders. Board members include **Ann Lee** (Academic Advising), **Tamika Smith** (Office of Student Life), **Larry Markle** (Office of Disabled Student Development), **Heather Bisher** (Office of Housing and Residence Life), **Jamie Johnson** (Academic Support for Student Athletes), **Roger McConnell** (School of Music), **Heather Bruns** (Department of Biology), **Taryn Condon** (Pan-Hellenic Scholarship Director), and **Sarah Mahl** (Residence Hall Association Representative). Thus far, the Advisory Board has met three times to discuss marketing, Learning Center renovation plans, grant development, and creation of the Learning Center’s annual report and newsletter.

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

- **Kelsey Fontaine** (Core Desk) is a member of the Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Society and will graduate Cum Laude.
- **Lauren Hamilton** (Math Desk) received an invitation for the Deloitte Touche LLP Summer Leadership Program.
- **Evan Wilson** (Math Desk) is finishing his second year as an Undergraduate Honors Fellow. Evan has also authored a poster for the national American Physical Society Meeting and a paper published in *Applied Optics*.
- **Dawn Savidge** (Math Desk) was recognized this semester as a Top Scholar in Marketing and Management in the Miller College of Business. She has also been invited to join Beta Gamma Sigma, an International Honor Society for business students.
- **Sara Knape** (Core Desk) will serve as a junior marshal for graduation.
- **Juli Digate** (Core Desk) was awarded the Perham Award for Distinction in Academics and Leadership as part of the Indiana Women of Achievement.
- **Andrea Meyer** (Core Desk) is graduating cum laude and is a member of the National Society of Nursing (Sigma Theta Tau).
- **Lauren Carmin** (Core Desk) was awarded the Burkhardt Award, a \$2,000 stipend for her exchange to Nancy, France where she will be teaching English at a French university.
- **Rosamae Swoape** (Core Desk) won the Religious Studies Essay Contest this year. She is also receiving the Outstanding Senior awards for both philosophy and religious studies. Rosamae also authored "Cognitive Authority and the Parental Ideal," accepted for presentation at the OSU Undergraduate Philosophy Conference.
- **Nathan Hatfield** (Core Desk) has received the Honors College Presidential Scholarship from 2007-2011; the 2008 Merrill Lippy Scholarship for an Outstanding Sophomore in History; the 2008 Outstanding Sophomore Award from the History Department; the 2009 Outstanding Junior Award from the History Department; the 2010 Outstanding Senior Award from the History Department; and was a 2010 Student History Conference presenter (Muncie as a Microcosm of Industrialization).
- **Allison Adkins** (Core Desk) received the Outstanding Junior in History award from the History Department.
- **Jillian Carroll** (Core Desk) was the Thomas and Beatrice Mertens Award for Excellence in Genetics recipient 2008-2009; an Honors College Research Fellow 2009-2010; an Honors College Presidential Scholarship recipient 2006-2010; and her research group was published at the 2010 International Plant and Animal Genome XVIII Conference in San Diego.
- **Kyla Denzio** (Core Desk) studied at the University of Málaga in Spain for ten months.
- **Erin Loch** (Writing Desk) was the recipient of the Fulbright grant for English Teaching Assistantship in Germany for 2010-2011; she also received the English Department's Outstanding Senior Award 2009-2010.
- **Julia Hill** (Core Desk) was the recipient of the Robert Cooper Audubon Society scholarship this semester, enabling her to attend the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association's annual symposium in Seattle.
- **Brett Hopkins** (Core Desk) will be graduating summa cum laude this May. Brett won the Outstanding Senior Award and Excellence in Undergraduate Research Award for the Department of Chemistry. Brett gave a poster presentation at the local American Chemical Society Meeting and also gave an oral presentation at the Indiana Academy of Sciences Meeting.

Congratulations!

“There Were Times When I Just Wanted to Give Up”

How do we know that the tutoring and Supplemental Instruction programs are really having a positive effect on the academic development of students?

We decided to ask the students who use our services that very question.

Jillian Wander, a client of nursing tutor **Kelsey Fontaine** (Core Desk), had this to say: “The Learning Center and tutoring process has immensely helped further my knowledge, prioritize my goals, and boost

my confidence to a whole new level. I am a nursing major and there were times when I just wanted to give up, and I felt like the exams were consuming my life. With the help and support of my dear friend and tutor Kelsey, I was able to overcome my fears of exams and decrease my level of anxiety. The process is highly beneficial and I would highly recommend the Learning Center to any Ball State student, because you never know when you just may meet a new friend and learn some new things about yourself along the way.”

Emily Saurber adds that “Kelsey indi-

vidualized her tutoring for each person in the group...she related each topic to something we could understand better. Her intelligence with nursing was incredible. No matter how long it took, she wouldn't stop teaching until she knew that you were comfortable with the nursing subject discussed. She was willing to meet with us outside of our sessions...If I was ever stuck on something specific Kelsey was always just a phone call away to explain it to me. **I can honestly say that my success in these two nursing classes falls a lot on the tutoring I received.”**

“She Didn't Just Give Me the Answers”

Krystal Taylor has been tutored this semester by **Sophia Jacobs**, a Spanish tutor at the Core Desk. Krystal notes, “She was awesome! My instructors were great, but they just moved way too fast and didn't have time to necessarily help students on an individual level. Sophia was a great tutor because she didn't just give me the answers, she would help me figure the answers out and ask me how it was that I got to those

answers. She really was full of a lot of tips to help me memorize things and always had time to go over whatever I felt I needed help with. Before Spanish 201 I hadn't ever needed tutoring, but once I had Sophia I realized just how useful tutors are and my grades not only improved, but I was actually learning and retaining information a lot better. The Learning Center and its tutors are great Ball State services and I'm lucky

that I got such a wonderful tutor!”

Megan Branam adds that with Sophia as a tutor, “I immediately noticed a difference in my progress in the class. My next test after meeting with Sophia was at least a letter grade better than the one before it. She made everything easy to understand and helped me remember tenses and verbs that I didn't understand in class.”

“For Some Strange Reason She Loves A Subject that Most of Us Detest”

Dawn Savidge is an Economics tutor at the Math Desk who has helped many frustrated students. **Abby Goodpaster** notes that Dawn, “for some strange reason loves a subject that most of us detest, which is great because it helps us learn the material that much better, by her re-teaching us what we need to know.” **Jackie O'Mara** concurs: “Her review sessions for ECON 221 were

VERY, VERY helpful and I know the other classmates felt the same way. If it weren't for Dawn, I would not be passing the class; I cannot thank her enough.”

Lester D. Petty comments on Dawn's rapport with the students: “Dawn has always been open and patient with all of us in helping us to prepare for class discussions and exams. The atmosphere during the

tutoring sessions is always friendly and encouraging. I always leave the sessions more confident about my knowledge of the course material.” **Cameron Benson** adds that “I did a complete 180 in the class and on the test. On my last test I had a better score than on my first two tests combined, and it is in a big part due to Dawn.”

Student Brooklyn Tuttle appreciated Nathan Hatfield's History 150 SI sessions: “I am so glad that I decided to attend the study sessions because my understanding of the material became more clear even after my first study session. Nathan was able to present the information in a more manageable and easy-to-understand way. Now after frequently attending the sessions I find that I am able to study for quizzes more effectively and participate in class more because I have grasped the information so much better than with just lecture alone. Having a helpful SI leader has been a lifesaver.”

Staff

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Those who learn together, learn best.

Tutors are certified by the **College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA)**, providing a national standard for skills and 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 of Developmental Education (NADE)**, an organization that recognizes programs that meet or exceed the criteria of good practices as defined by professional research and literature of the field.

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

Coming Soon: Learning Center Foundation Account

Over the past twenty-five years, the University College Learning Center has provided tutoring and Supplemental Instruction to tens of thousands of Ball State University students.

The Learning Center continues to further its mission to enhance the academic success of Ball State University students by providing free peer tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, and workshops covering a variety of academic issues. As more and more students use our services each year, we continue to increase our student staff.

The Learning Center is facing a time of tough decisions. We do not want to decrease academic support services for our students, but our resources are being stretched to the limit. Because of budget cuts, rising tuition and cost of textbooks, most students cannot afford to pay for tutoring services, and we are committed to maintaining our services as free.

Therefore, for the first time, the Learning Center would like to establish a foundation account (separate from the University College Foundation Account). Funds will be placed into a general account for Learning Center use only and will be used to sustain free academic support services for all Ball State University students,

including the hiring and training of tutors, Supplemental Instruction leaders, and student assistants, and the purchase of supplies and resources for tutoring, training, and recognition.

The process is underway for a fundraising drive to generate capital to establish the account. Once the account is established, former employees, clients, and interested faculty and staff will be able to help financially support the Learning Center services.

For more information about the Learning Center Foundation Account, contact Jennifer Haley at jhaley@bsu.edu.

