Who’s new to the Learning Center?

The Learning Center would like to introduce several new faces that are ready to help you become a better student. It takes more than just being good at something to be a good tutor; they should be problem solvers and critical thinkers as well.

We have nine new members including: Two SPP tutoring associates, four new graduate associates, one learning specialist, and two faculty members who are available to help students gain new learning strategies and think outside the box. Most of them started working in new positions this fall.

The nine new members have come to work in the Learning Center for similar reasons. They all enjoy helping others and have focused on providing a variety of new formats for helping students.

Due to the retirement of Dr. Nanette Hatzes, Dr. Karen Johnson has accepted the position of Interim Director of the Learning Center. Dr. Johnson brings many years of experience in directing tutoring as she managed her own tutoring business for a number of years. She received her undergraduate degree in

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IWCA Conferences

On November 3rd, Nicole Bollinger, along with Drs. Laurie Cella and Karen Johnson, headed down to Baltimore, Maryland, to attend the International Writing Center Association Conference. This Shippensburg team had conducted an empirical research study collaboratively with York College concerning the effects of writing center consultations upon student writing. The results of this study were presented in their session that was entitled, “Writing Consultants as Tugboats: An Investigation on the ‘Pull’ Consultant Feedback Exerts on Student Achievement.” From this investigation, the researchers discovered a significant difference between students who attended writing consultations and those who did not attend writing consultations for a writing assignment. Drs. Johnson and Cella also gave another presentation, “Charting a New Course: One University’s Piloting of New Collaborations and Initiatives,” at the same conference. Drs. Cella and Johnson discussed their collaborative initiatives at SU and the benefits that have resulted from their efforts.
Who’s new at the Learning Center?

Elementary/ Middle School Education and later earned her master’s degree in Teaching and Curriculum with a Reading Specialist certificate. Karen received her doctorate degree in Teaching and Learning and completed her dissertation on the effects of service-learning upon students’ achievement of learning outcomes. Karen describes the atmosphere of the Learning Center as dynamic and energizing: “I feel the energy in the Learning Center when I see students actively participating in learning activities. Throughout the day, I can hear students engaging in lively conversations in either English, Spanish, or French. It is quite apparent that this venue of learning is positively impacting learners across the SU campus.” Karen enjoys helping to develop programs that can assist students in reaching their academic goals.

Nicole Bailey came to SU to assume the Interim Associate Director of the Learning Center position left vacant by Dr. Johnson’s acceptance of the director role. Before Nicole came to SU, she worked as an adjunct professor of English Composition and Developmental Writing at Harrisburg Area Community College and in the college’s writing center. Prior to working in higher education Nicole taught English to children in South Korea. Nicole enjoys working at the Learning Center because it allows her to get to know students and to be hands-on in making improvements to the center. She also is able to tackle a variety of tasks each day. For instance, her daily goals include a range of activities such as editing the website (http://www.ship.edu/learning), meeting with students and tutors, giving workshops, and whatever else comes her way! Nicole would also like to add, “The LC is nothing without our fantastic tutors; they make what we do possible!”

Dr. Karen Johnson  
Interim Director of the Learning Center

Nicole Bailey  
Learning Center Associate Director

Sherry Hillyard  
Learning Specialist
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The new learning specialist, Sherry Hillyard, works with individual students on skills such as time management, test taking strategies, and study skills. She works with many freshmen and athletes who are learning how to make the transition from high school to college. Sherry loves her work at the Learning Center, which aligns nicely with her degrees in education. Currently, Sherry splits her time between working in the Learning Center and the Office of Disabilities on the SU campus.

The Learning Center’s new SPP Tutoring Associates include Tony Blair and Cassie Shive. Tony tutors students with biology, chemistry, and physics. Cassie is an English major who was always interested in helping her peers edit their papers. She uses her ability to write and interact with people as a way to help them succeed in writing compositions and helping students with their English coursework.

Four new graduate assistants have joined the Learning Center team. Joe Brubaker is a Secondary Social Studies Education major, and a graduate student in the Special Education Department. Long before graduate school he was interested in helping students achieve academic success. Lauren Lowenthal came to the Learning Center after working for several different companies including IBM. She was a consultant for organizational change where she worked to solve problems the company was experiencing. Lauren uses her past experience with “fact finding” to relate to students and help them solve problems by asking questions to get to the core problem. Once she knows what the core problem is, it is much easier to help the student learn. Joe Thomas brings a number of gifts to the Learning Center through his leadership in directing tutor training and tutoring students in the sciences. Matthew Kichline works closely with Jaime Juarez in the AIM program and tutors students in a variety of courses. All of the graduate assistants play an important role in helping the Learning Center carry out its mission.

Everyone at the Learning Center agrees that helping students achieve their goals is the main reason why they started working in the Learning Center. In the words of Cassie Shive, “It’s a very rewarding experience to help a peer make the light bulb go on in their head.” While working at the Learning Center they have realized that each day is different. Although it can get hectic and busy at the Learning Center, all of the new members would agree that the center is a wonderful place to work!

—by Kelly Moriarty

Exciting new programs at the Learning Center—

Drop-in Content Tutoring

Subject-specific drop-in tutoring nights is now available!

Students currently taking Biology or Chemistry courses can stop by to ask a quick question, or they are free to stay for more in-depth assistance.

This is an excellent opportunity for students to receive academic support without pre-scheduling an appointment while also getting to know some of the other students from their class. Visit the Learning Center website to find a full schedule of the drop-in evenings and subjects for the spring 2011 semester.

—by Zack Grabosky
**Media Writing Pilot**

This semester, the Learning Center collaborated with Dr. Drager from the Communication/Journalism Department with the goal of improving grammar competencies among students. Since the Media Writing course requires proficiency in grammar, students needing extra help were asked to visit the Learning Center. These students met with writing tutors about once a week to work on AP style writing and common grammar errors within that subject. With the completion of writing samples, the Learning Center tracked student progress throughout the semester. Olivia Dougherty and Cassandra Shive developed a proposal and applied for an Undergraduate Research Grant in order to complete this research and present it at two conferences in the spring. Since the grant has been approved, we are now in the process of compiling our collected research. It will be presented as a mixed methods study, concentrating on both qualitative and quantitative research.

- **by Cassandra Shive**

**Drop-in Writing Tutoring**

During this semester, the Learning Center began drop-in writing tutoring. Held on Thursday nights between 6:00 and 9:00, tutors assisted students in one-on-one and group reviews of their writing assignments. Tutors covered topics ranging from grammatical errors to maintaining academic integrity. Afterwards, students and tutors together complete a writing feedback form designed to summarize and evaluate the success of the session. After a drop-in session, students often return to the Learning Center either for a more personal individual appointment or for another drop-in hour the next week. In total, the success of the Writing Drop-in Tutoring pilot program can be contextualized by one student’s comments after leaving a one-on-one review session: “It was a relaxed atmosphere where I felt comfortable asking the questions I needed answered.”

- **by Nicole Bollinger**

**Online Writing Workshops**

Based on demand and faculty suggestions, the Learning Center staff developed a series of 30 minute writing workshops for the fall semester. With the idea of building writing skills in a progressive way, the ten workshops began with a Pre-Writing Skills session and ended with a presentation on learning how to employ objectivity or subjectivity in writing assignments.

Initially, workshop attendance ranged from five to seven students, but these numbers quickly grew to a final count of around thirty-five students per session. Many attendees participated for extra credit or through encouragement by their professors. The success of the workshops throughout fall semester supported the need to expand the format and avail the presentations to more students campus-wide. To this end, online versions of this Fall’s workshops will be placed on the Learning Center website in time for Spring semester. The on-line workshops will include video and Smart Board usage to retain an interactive approach. Watch for the modified sessions on-line, beginning in January, 2011, by visiting www.ship.edu/learning and selecting the Workshops tab.

- **by Sherry Hillyard**

**Website Updates**

In the Fall of 2010, the Learning Center began an extensive revision of its website, which will be completed by the start of Spring semester. Though the web address remains the same, the new website will feature a structure designed to accommodate the Learning Center’s many resources, which include informational handouts, PowerPoint presentations, and videos. The goal of the re-imagined web space is to provide students with multiple ways to get help with their studies in one easy-to-use space. Along with information on types of tutoring and how to make an appointment, students will have access to interactive workshops and a plethora of materials to help build study and writing skills. In a section for faculty, Ship instructors will find information to help them make the best use of the LC’s services as well as promote these resources in the classroom. Be sure to visit us at www.ship.edu/learning in Spring 2011!

- **by Nicole Bailey**
Announcements:

- Small group tutoring available in a variety of subjects. Call the Learning Center for more information.

- The Learning Center can be found on Facebook!

Coming Soon:

- The Learning Center is excited to announce a new way to connect with tutors for the Spring 2010 semester. Students will now be able to schedule tutoring appointments online, as well as view the tutoring schedule in real-time to identify opportunities to receive walk-in tutoring when it is most convenient for them. Just visit http://ship.edu/learning to find out more!

Contact Us

Phone: 477–1420

Email: learning@ship.edu

Location: Main level of the library

Hours: Mon–Thurs 10 a.m.–9 p.m.
      Sun–5 p.m.–9 p.m.

Website: http://www.ship.edu/learning/