

NCLCA Concurrent Session Sample Proposal

1. Title:

ER in the LC: Triage, Treatment, and Intervention for the “Help! I Have a Test Tomorrow” Clients

2. Summary:

Perhaps one of the most challenging tutoring situations is working with a client who is in an academic crisis situation; a departure from the more relaxed, comfortably-paced session with a regular client. This session will discuss strategies such as triage (identifying quickly what needs to be accomplished), treatment (helping clients to “cram” in 50 minutes or less), and intervention (enabling an assertive tutor who uses a combination of behavioral, cognitive, and social psychologic principles to “tell it like it is” in order to reach out to students stuck in a self-destructive cycle of cramming). Plans for a CRLA-compliant tutor training in-service on this topic will also be provided.

3. Abstract:

- a. **Description:** *Provide a brief description of the content of this session. We welcome sessions on programs, research studies, scholarly work, assessment results, and theoretical discussions.*

As tutoring coordinators in a learning center certified at CRLA Levels 1, 2, and 3, we have developed several in-service sessions to which all tutors are invited. An in-service that has received very positive feedback is our “ER in the LC” in-service, which offers practical ideas for working with clients in an academic crisis situation using a three-part method of triage, treatment, and intervention. Our presentation will focus on a discussion of the training in-service that we provide our tutors regarding the topic of “ER in the LC.” Thus, we will be accomplishing two goals: an explanation of our three-part method of triage, treatment, and intervention that will be useful to tutors and coordinators alike, and a discussion of the scope and structure of the in-service we present to our tutors, which will be useful to coordinators in terms of planning training in-services of their own.

- b. **Method:** *How will you present this information in the session? (PowerPoint? Video? Handouts? Activities? Discussion? Group work?) Describe how you will manage your time during this 50-minute session.*

We will begin our presentation with an “icebreaker” that models the opening we typically use during our tutor training in-services (10 minutes). We will then move to a brief background of the in-service component of our tutor training program (10 minutes), followed by an in-depth discussion of the “ER in the LC” in-service that we offer to our tutors (20 minutes). Materials include a Prezi that will incorporate video clips as well as a folder with relevant handouts. We will conclude by asking the participants to share stories and ideas of their own experiences with clients in academic crisis (10 minutes).

- c. **Application:** *How does your session advance knowledge that is relevant to learning center professionals? How is this session relevant for multiple institution types (2-year/4-year, public/private, large/small)?*

While we encourage clients to be proactive and schedule tutoring appointments regularly throughout the semester, some students will procrastinate and seek out tutoring support at the last moment. We strive to ensure that all clients feel comfortable and welcome in our learning center and receive quality academic support services regardless of any time (mis)management and other poor study habits. Accordingly, we feel it is crucial to train tutors to respond to these academic crisis tutoring sessions with a focused emphasis on assessing the client’s immediate needs, meeting those needs, and practicing appropriate “intervention” skills to instill in the client better study habits. These techniques are relevant to any size of institution/learning center, although it is most relevant to those tutorial services that offer weekly (recurring) appointments to students.

- d. **Analysis:** *What are the strengths and weaknesses of your program, research study, scholarly work, assessment, and/or theoretical discussions?*

The strength of this tutor training in-service is that the scenario is very familiar to tutors, and the strategies described are ones that can be incorporated into a tutoring session with relative ease. The fact that we have used elements of intervention theory is novel to our tutors and strikes a chord: their clients need both immediate and long-term help, and starting that discussion is often difficult. The weakness is that these strategies will work best for tutoring programs that offer weekly, recurring appointments with the same tutor. Tutorial programs that offer only drop-in or “floating” services may not benefit as much from these strategies.

- e. **Synthesis:** *Describe the essential elements and staff needed for your program, study, publication, assessment, etc. Were you missing any essential elements? What are the basics that other learning center professionals may need to embark on a similar project?*

The necessary elements for this in-service are simple: we used PowerPoint and provided the students with a PowerPoint print-out. Two coordinators shared the duties of explaining content and leading the group activities. The in-service was video-taped and placed in our archives so students could access it at a later time. As described above, this in-service fits into CRLA tutor training, but other learning center professionals could utilize this in-service without CRLA certification in place.

4. **Conference theme:** *How is the presentation relevant to the conference theme? How does it advance knowledge relevant to learning center professionals?*

Issues of retention and timely degree of completion are very important on many campuses now, and our institution is no different. Learning centers have a critical role to play in helping students in academic crisis situations by teaching them collegiate study habits. Thus, our academic support services will indeed help our centers, our students, and our institution to “soar into the future,” one that is focused squarely on retention and timely degree completion.