



NATIONAL
COLLEGE LEARNING CENTER
ASSOCIATION

NCLCA

Newsletter

Summer 2020

Hello,

We hope these articles of practice, response, and persistence connect you to our community and support you, your teams, and centers during this time of rapid change. We invite you to have a voice by publishing in the next newsletter so we can continue to foster success.

Stay Safe,

Publications Team

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President's Message

Geoff Bailey

NCLCA President

Executive Director, REACH

University of Louisville, Kentucky



Dear Colleagues,

The ongoing tragedies in our country involving the murder of George Floyd and other African-Americans at the hands of the police and violence against the African-American community are both deplorable and deeply disturbing. Such events have transpired far too many times to count. Moreover, they illuminate the systemic racism that destroys the fabric of our society and demonstrates how far we still need to go to achieve social justice.

Silence is not an option.

It conveys complicity in a system that disadvantages individuals and destroys lives and communities. We cannot afford to witness events, like the ones that have unfolded in recent weeks, and choose to remain bystanders.

NCLCA's mission of supporting the leadership development of learning center professionals is underscored by a commitment to the principles of social justice and inclusivity. We must stand against the injustices that permeate our society and ensure that our actions mirror our language.

We must demonstrate compassion for our brothers and sisters, our colleagues and friends, our neighbors and our communities.

We must work diligently to understand how privilege and power disadvantages people of color.

We must find ways to redesign systems and policies that reinforce such privilege and power. In doing so, we take meaningful steps towards ensuring that we play a pivotal role in not only understanding but actively improving the lived experiences of our students, our colleagues and faculty, and the communities that we are each called to serve.

At our most recent annual conference in Louisville, NCLCA took some critical first steps towards this important work by sharing our Inclusivity Pledge. We are currently in the process of developing specific action steps that all learning center professionals can take to promote the principles of social justice and inclusivity on a practical level through our services, our structures, and the roles we hold. We will continue to promote critical dialogue about diversity, inclusivity, and social justice throughout our professional development offerings.

NCLCA will remain steadfast and unequivocal in calling out intolerance, hatred, and acts that threaten our shared humanity and reinforce systems of oppression.

On behalf of the NCLCA Board,

Geoff Bailey, President

“As an African American and long-standing member of the learning center community, I am heartened by the NCLCA leadership team’s statement recognizing our obligation to stand in solidarity with students of color and dismantle the structures and policies that disadvantage them. I am more hopeful than ever that we can work together to transform learning support systems so that they best serve all of our students. I am confident that we are up to the daunting task.”

~ Sandra McGuire, CLADEA Fellow and NCLCA Member

Center Spotlight

Response to Covid-19

Down the Rabbit Hole

By Brandi Stout



The Learning Space, Madisonville Community College

This semester began like many others, but around midterm, the tunnel dipped suddenly, dropping each of us into our own rabbit-holes. The Learning Space's transition to remote services at Madisonville Community College has been, quite luckily for us, buttressed by fantastically adaptable staff, and we were able to be up and running in basic capacity within a matter of hours. Processes, policies, and principles have been a matter of trial and error, but staff have risen to the occasion.

There have been, of course, challenges. In a rural area, accessibility is one of our most difficult hurdles to overcome; in fact, I did not have home internet service during the first few weeks of remote work and spent many days in parking lots to find reliable wireless service, sometimes attempting to work from my phone. My internet struggle was a glaring reminder that we needed to be as flexible as possible with our students who struggle with similar, or sometimes worse, situations. With that in mind, we have made it a mission to meet the students in whatever virtual forums that they can access. We have employed Microsoft Teams as our main platform, but also have used Zoom, Facebook, email, and even Google Voice texting.

Our flexibility about platforms has presented challenges in keeping track of work at all hours of the day. The Microsoft suite of products, however, has allowed us to create a landing space during this long slide down the rabbit-hole. We centralized some staff work in a Microsoft Team where we touch base with one another and provide individualized training for staff. We created a similar student Team where we offer workshops, a notebook of resources, and daily drop-in sessions in addition to regular, scheduled tutoring sessions.

To face the challenge of recordkeeping, we use the staff Team Site because tutors can record sessions as they happen, using a Microsoft Form. As the weeks progressed, I have streamlined the data processes. To that end, I taught myself to use Power Automate to tie these forms to a database that updates in real time. Shortly after, I learned how to use Power BI to create reports, complete with graphic representations of the data, that are also updated in real time with our database.

What have I taken away from all this? I was buried in my comfort zone before COVID-19 dropped the floor out from under us all. Falling down that rabbit-hole has led to an adventure of learning and creation, and I'm excited to see what else we can do.

"For, you see, so many out-of-the-way things had happened lately, that Alice had begun to think that very few things indeed were really impossible."

Program Transition

By Emily Edgerton

Science Learning Center, University of Michigan



The Science Learning Center (SLC) at the University of Michigan offers tutoring for sixteen STEM courses. Before COVID-19, the SLC offered in-person drop-in tutoring, in-person appointment based tutoring, and piloted an online drop-in tutor program, using GoBoard software (<https://goboard.com/>).

After COVID-19, staff moved appointment based and drop-in tutoring online using GoBoard. The primary concern was how students and student staff would be impacted by each decision made during this transition. The primary goal was to make the transition to online tutoring as simple and effective from the student-staff and student-user perspectives.

The SLC decided to have students register for appointment based tutoring using the same system as in-person, WC Online. While this platform remained the same, this transition meant tutors had to contact students via email with a link to connect virtually on GoBoard. Tutors were provided a specific email script that included a placeholder for the GoBoard link and instructions for how to use GoBoard most effectively.

The transition for drop-in tutoring was a little more complicated, as it required the creation of a system for students to drop-in virtually on GoBoard. Google Forms were created for each course, and when a student wanted to access drop-in tutoring online, they filled it out. During the drop-in tutoring shift, tutors would monitor the Google Forms and contact the students via email with the same script as appointment based tutoring.

An immediate challenge for these new processes was how to effectively communicate online tutoring services to students. The SLC sent an email to students in the class every time drop-in tutoring started. The email included the Google Form to fill out and information on how to use GoBoard. While this process required administrative time, it ensured the students had consistent, easy access to drop-in tutoring. For appointment based tutoring, bi-weekly emails

were sent out to students with a picture of the tutor and a brief description listing the benefits of appointment based tutoring. Additionally, information about how SLC tutoring transitioned online was shared with faculty and campus partners. Utilizing these key collaborators to spread information to students was critical in making sure students saw the value in online tutoring and knew how to access tutors.

The SLC is still grappling with concerns regarding the current online system. For example, the students using tutoring now have easy access to tutor's email addresses. Historically, that type of information was not shared to prevent students from contacting tutors beyond working hours. However, the guiding principle behind the success of this transition has been considering the impact on student-users with each decision made. Moving forward, this experience has increased the likelihood that online tutoring will be a stronger part of the SLC tutor services. I believe an increased number of students have started to find online tutoring beneficial and will want to continue when in person services resume.

From In-Line Lab to Online: Our Crash Course in Going Virtual

By Elizabeth Pressler, Raul Martin,
Barbara Morrison, & Arlene Turkel



Learning Center, Lamar State College Orange

Prior to the COVID19 outbreak and social distancing requirements, our small Learning Center’s main priorities included strengthening face-to-face services, increasing student visits to the lab, and building viable peer tutoring and Supplemental Instruction programs. With a third-party tutoring service available to students needing help online, we focused on hands-on rather than distance tutoring strategies. However, the sudden need to drastically reduce open lab hours with only one staff member on duty at a time forced us to pivot 180 degrees. Over two weeks, beginning in late March, our fearless four-member staff dove in and, we are pleased to say, laid a foundation for developing a virtual learning center. Our staff continues learning to navigate and apply technologies that will not only support virtual operations, but also help us better serve the diverse needs of students, regardless of circumstances. Allow us to share a few highlights of our “virtual crash course.”

- NCLCA Webinars: Free, just-in-time webinars, *Shifting Our Learning Centers Online*, parts I & II, and ACUE *Effective Online Instruction*, a 6-part series, seeded a few ideas and jump-started our shift online.
- Communicating with other learning centers: Reaching out to other professionals opened additional possibilities and boosted our confidence to cope. For example, the UNT Learning Center responded by email to offer advice on operating virtual, drop-in tutoring rooms.
- Phone Access: To compensate for limited access to office phones, we added a live chat widget to our webpage. The widget gives students a synchronous means of contact with staff and helps extend our hours of availability when we cannot be on campus.
- Office 365 Applications: To facilitate staff communication and collaboration, we explored the Office 365 Teams app. It has proven superior to email in allowing us to communicate via threaded chats and share documents.
- Blackboard Collaborate Ultra: This enables us to collaboratively explore web applications and experiment with ways to tutor students online. The screen-sharing feature is especially helpful in helping troubleshoot technology issues.
- GoBoard.com: This is our choice platform for tutoring math. It integrates online calculators and an equation editor, features lacking in the simpler whiteboard available in Bb Collaborate Ultra.
- StudyBlue.com: This resource allows our SI leader for A&P to create virtual flashcard decks for individual and study group use.
- Student Employees: One of the most challenging aspects of our transition was finding ways for our two student employees to contribute, as we had never trained them to work online. Luckily, they both adapted quite easily. After a quick practice session, our student workers began helping us monitor the chat widget. They have also enjoyed creating digital content (flyers, tip-sheets, etc.) to support their fellow students and publicize our services.

Though fraught with frustration at times, the consensus among our staff is that the plunge into online operations and technological exploration has made us more innovative, flexible, and emboldened to face change. This new outlook will, no doubt, equip us well to meet the evolving needs of our students, our campus, and our community.

Transitioning from In Person to Virtual Academic Support

By Jami Houston

The Student Learning Center, The University of Oklahoma



In a recent, post-transition to online learning conversation with my staff, I was reminded how one of my goals for the year was to increase our technology usage. However, I was clear that this did not mean online tutoring. Rather, I wanted to think innovatively about how we could increase our use of iPads in sessions, better incorporating educational apps and other technologies into our face-to-face sessions. Fast forward six months and here we are operating exclusively online, including online tutoring.

Like many institutions, we had to quickly pivot from completely in-person programs to all online. Our programs consist of 50+ weekly walk-in sessions in over 90 courses and smaller group or individual appointments, individual study skills consultations, and monthly pre-exam study nights for larger introductory courses with uniform exams. In the course of our transition, we moved from going virtual for the two weeks following spring break to going virtual for the remainder of the semester.

I think our main goal was to be up and running so students had a place to connect back to campus. Many classes did not transition to synchronous meeting times so students were no longer “meeting” with their instructors and classmates. Tutoring is a place where they can interact with others. We really wanted to “be there” for students as they made this transition.

IT provided vital support in the transition, helping us to get set up in Zoom and to think through how to best use that platform for tutoring. They also provided training to our staff on some of the more specific Zoom uses such as breakout rooms (used to create small group settings) and the whiteboard function. We held a virtual staff meeting the Sunday night after spring break to help our staff get up to speed and prepared to make a strong start. Not only were we able to share our expectations and new procedures, but the meeting also helped staff

get a feel for Zoom. Most of the staff was pleasantly surprised by the functionality of Zoom. We continued to share instructions, videos, and screenshots as we learned more.

One thing I have come to realize is that because we have so many student staff that we did not see on a daily basis, much of our management was virtual already. We already relied on email, texting, and our Canvas page (LMS used by the University) to communicate. The main thing we did here was increase the frequency of our communication. In the first couple of weeks, things were changing rapidly, and our staff needed to know about changes to technology, security, and processes. We were eventually able to decrease the amount of emails. We utilized our Canvas page to post instructions, trainings, and updates related to Zoom so staff would always have access, and we've recently added a section that archives all updates so there's no need to search through old emails.

As much as things changed for us, they really stayed the same. We were able to offer our regular schedule and sessions. The main policy we relaxed was the dress code. We didn't alter any policy documents, but we did amend our observation form to exclude things no longer possible and include new components relevant to virtual tutoring. We've adjusted our staff expectations as well, understanding that technology isn't consistent and that everyone's lives have changed.

Now that the semester is winding down, we're starting to look towards the future of online tutoring. Our University will be completely online for summer, which in turn means tutoring will be as well. Sessions have gone well. We've adjusted to the new technology, and we're working to ensure that we continue to offer active learning opportunities for students. But we now need to adjust to new class expectations. As we transition to open-book exams, or no exams at all, we need to think differently about how we support students in these courses. It's challenging, but exciting to see what we can do!

Turning on a Dime

By Jeffery White

Shepard Academic Resource Center, The University of Portland



March 10th seems like years ago. That day we learned we would shift in a week to remote operations. I sent out an email to my tutors to join our Virtual Tutoring Teams Group and a Microsoft Bookings link to reserve times for online training on using Microsoft Teams. Between March 12 and March 17, I trained 55 tutors on using Teams as a tutoring platform. Our training sessions lasted 30 minutes and took place in MS Teams. We covered a brief overview of Teams and our Virtual Tutoring Teams Group structure, followed by training on scheduling a meeting, starting and ending a meeting, signing in students using MS Forms, sharing whiteboards and files, use of chat, and applying tutoring and writing assistance approaches in the Teams environment. Thankfully, our tutors displayed a positive attitude and initiative in the training and throughout the weeks of tutoring online.

Most of our tutoring is normally done by appointment, but we do offer some drop-in tutoring in math, and we had started a Sunday afternoon drop-in math homework program at the beginning of the semester. Once we shifted to virtual tutoring, our appointment systems remained the same as they had been, and appointments began to roll in, even before the official beginning of remote learning.

Drop-in was, however, a different story. In week ten, we started our Sunday Afternoon Math program in a different Team that was designated for drop-in math programming. We had six students that afternoon and thought there may be demand for drop-in math tutoring. Four days later we opened the Team for drop-in tutoring Sundays through Thursdays from 5:00 to 9:00 pm, naming the Team “The MRC Math Hangout.” Despite direct email and social media campaigns, only nine students used the service over four weeks, and, after the first week, Sunday Afternoon Math was rarely attended.

Overall, our numbers were down 65% and 72% from the same time last year. From March 16th through April 30, tutors signed in 153 students for 248 sessions, seventy-nine of which were for writing. On the one hand, the results are astonishingly negative, but we need to consider the context: a sudden shift to emergency remote learning due to the first major worldwide pandemic since the 1918 Spanish flu. On the other hand, we succeeded in setting up a new program for the future under disruptive circumstances. Our systems worked smoothly, and 87% of survey respondents agreed they wanted online tutoring as an option in the future, and 71% of our tutors who responded to a survey would like to continue offering online tutoring, even if we’re all back on campus. As we look toward the fall of 2020, I’m actually optimistic that we can build an online presence and have a thriving program because the students and faculty will be more prepared and intentional in their approaches, as we will have taken the summer to learn from this past semester.

Tutoring Services Transition to a Virtual Setting

By Shanna Williams

Teaching & Learning Center, Brookdale Community College



Like so many other institutes of higher learning across the country and throughout the world, Brookdale Community College, located in Monmouth County, NJ, needed to transition to an entirely remote learning environment while still ensuring students were provided not only with the high educational standards they were used to in the classroom but also had access to all the student services they were accustomed to utilizing that contribute to their success.

“I think we are doing better than any other community college in the state with transitioning our student services,” said Yesenia Madas, Associate Vice President of Student Affairs for Brookdale. “It is pretty remarkable that despite being in this environment, we were able to respond very quickly. I feel very proud that we didn’t miss a beat,” she said.

With an array of tutoring services in different academic departments, each area had different technology needs when transitioning to virtual services. Programs and options that worked for The Writing Center did not work for The Math Lab or The Computer Lab. However, all of the different tutoring services were able to make the transition to offering online help for students.

The Math Lab is one such tutoring service that is utilized by numerous students in an array of math classes from foundational studies to advanced calculus. “It is always a challenge to find the right tools for online teaching/tutoring,” said Kamalas Das, one of the mathematics academic tutors at Brookdale. Even though it was a challenge, the Math Lab team was able to quickly adjust. “We started early on, created and tested an online teaching environment with applicable tools, and then engaged our students,” she said. To meet the different needs of

students and classes, the Math Lab is using a number of different online tools, such as conducting tutoring appointments via Zoom. “We also use other online tools like graphing calculator simulators, Desmos, VMWare, Statcrunch, etc. as per need of the students,” Das said.

The Academic Tutors in the Math Lab at Brookdale said they have gotten mixed reactions from students about the switch to the online format. “I have many students that do prefer the traditional face-to-face tutoring. They are grateful for us helping them on Zoom, which for most is the next best thing to in-person tutoring,” said Tatiana Shabat, mathematics academic tutor. However, she said some students have had no issues with the transition. “There are some students that like the convenience of not having to travel,” said Shabat. In addition, the Math Lab was able to increase the hours of operation until 10 pm which a number of students find more accommodating for their schedule.

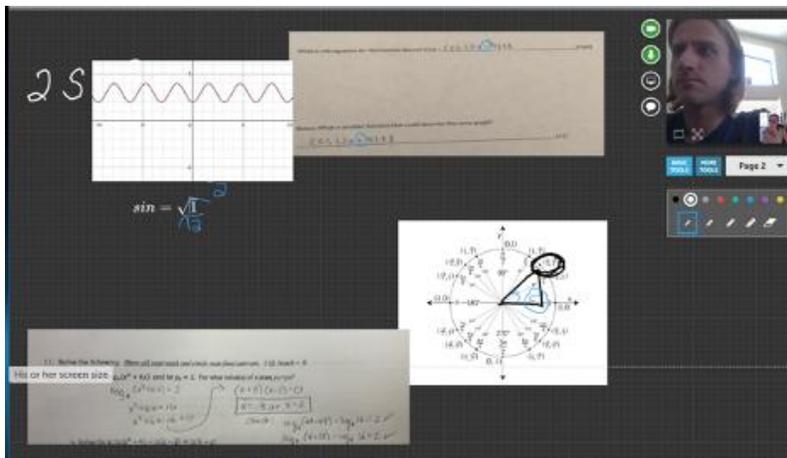
The Writing Center at Brookdale has also been able to increase the availability of tutoring hours with the switch to all online appointments. In addition to offering help Monday through Friday, the Writing Center now offers virtual appointments on Saturdays and Sundays as well. “We are trying to be really flexible and trying to accommodate our students, many of which are working even more hours now because they are essential workers,” said Sheri Stanford, one of the Writing Center’s Academic Tutors. The Reading Center has also been flexible with the ways the instructional assistants are interacting with students. “We realized we needed to be flexible with whatever technology our students had,” said Laura Kirkwood, Reading Center instructional assistant at Brookdale. They have been connecting with students via FaceTime, Zoom, and phone calls. “We gave students the option of how they wanted to interact with us,” she said.

“It has been an adjustment and a learning experience,” said Jeanne McCarthy, Reading Center instructional assistant at the college. “We will do whatever is necessary going forward to help our students,” she said.

Students seem to be benefiting from the virtual help the different tutoring departments have been able to offer. “Without a doubt, the remote electronic interactions I’ve had with students has been beneficial to them,” said John Magliacane, academic tutor in the computer science department.

Triage Leads to Silver Lining

By Janet Bowers & Lilian Bakayou



Math & Stats Learning Center, San Diego State University

As the news of the impending school shutdown ricocheted through our Math & Stats Learning Center, many tutors' first reaction was something like "Oh no, I really want to help more students!" It was moving to hear so many tutors thinking of their service before their own health or studies. We pledged to get them and the non-tutor employees up and running as quickly as possible. Thus began our two-tier triage approach.

Immediate need: Online tutors who run drop-in sessions now rely on one of two software packages: Zoom or GoBoard. Most tutors prefer using Zoom (for which the university has a site license) because of the whiteboard and their familiarity with it. Other tutors prefer GoBoard (See Figure 1), a free application from *Tutor Matching Service* that runs best on a tablet. The latter program has a shared writing space that easily allows for image sharing and mutual markup.

Once we got iPads and styluses purchased, we had just over 40% of our tutors indicate that they wanted to work online. To facilitate record collection, we developed a Jotform form that tutors submit after each shift to report hours worked and number of students served.

Secondary need: Our center also supports non-tutor student employees who were facing financial hardships because they were not able to be paid. To support them, we developed a survey of interests. We then collated the results to form teams of students to make some of

the changes we have always wanted to make but didn't have time. We used Slack to organize teams to:

- Create orientation videos for new tutors
- Produce content videos with captions to solve the most commonly asked math questions
- Organize a “drop in” effort so that each tutor was visited by one student employee to make sure the tutor was available and all technology was working,
- Ramp up our social media presence.

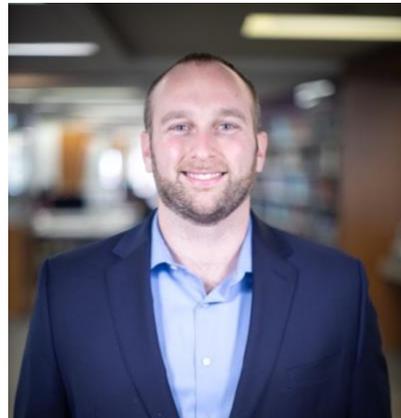
Finding the Silver Lining: Despite our best efforts to advertise on our webpage and have faculty announce our new schedule, our daily total visitor count dropped. Given that we will be online in the fall, we have learned that we that we need to step up our advertising efforts! To that end, we are working with instructors to plan a variety of incentive programs such as running a scavenger hunt to find an online tutor for HW points, having a worksheet that must be worked with and signed by a tutor, and giving a quick skills test and then allowing students to receive full credit if they go over their results with a tutor.

The transition to online has not been easy for our students or faculty. Many people decry the de-personalization and the lack of “back and forth” the classroom provides. But the silver lining we have found is that personal tutoring may be one of the only ways that students can feel independently valued. We are an essential service, maybe more than ever in these times.

Servant Leadership Guides Online Transition

By Kevin Knudsen

Academic Commons, The George Washington University



In early March, we heard rumblings that we might move classes and, subsequently, our learning assistance programming online. Academic Commons, an organization that provides students with a one-stop shop for academic resources across campus, had some (although limited) experience facilitating academic support online, but to take all 80+ student employees online in such a short period of time was a daunting task. I recall saying to myself how I hoped to be doing all of this preparation work for nothing, that the shift would not happen, and that we would finish the spring semester like so many before.

And then it happened. Things started moving quickly. Much like several other universities across the country, we got the announcement that classes would be held online. Students were told to prepare to not return to campus for two weeks after spring break. Most staff, including myself, were told to prepare to work remotely. It was a difficult situation to say the least.

Throughout this stressful time period, I was reminded of the servant leadership model (Greenleaf, 1970). According to the Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership (2016), “servant leadership is a philosophy and set of principles that enriches the lives of individuals, builds better organizations and ultimately creates a more just and caring world.” In his original writing, Greenleaf (1970) describes the servant leader as someone who prioritizes other peoples’ needs and ensures they are met. He writes of the importance of foresight, of listening to followers and understanding their problems, and being accepting and empathetic. While one could argue these are always important qualities for effective leaders, this is especially so at times of crisis.

This theory of leadership was my guiding principle throughout the transition. My team and I worked to anticipate and proactively solve the challenges ahead. We set expectations for our student-staff and provided every resource and tool that we could to help them meet and exceed them. We continued to offer training opportunities and incorporated time for everyone to share lessons they learned from working online so we could grow together. I was in awe of the level of care and support I observed members of the team provide to students as they learned to navigate this new environment. It was clear to me that a servant leader mindset transcended throughout the organization I am so fortunate to lead.

At the time of writing, we are about to conclude the spring semester. We are planning for an online summer term and are thinking ahead to what the fall might look like. No matter what, I know our servant-first mentality will lead us to success no matter the circumstances.

Practitioner's Corner

Innovating an In-Person Study Support Event for a Virtual Space

By Kirsten Komera



Academic Center for Excellence, Our Lady of the Lake University

On the last day of classes each term, Our Lady of the Lake University's Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) sponsors an event called StudyCon. StudyCon is a riff on the concept of convention, a large gathering of people with a shared interest. The ACE, in collaboration with the Library, Campus Ministry, Counseling Services, Services to Students with Disabilities, Student Advocacy, and Academic Advising have consciously set about to establish the event and its philosophy of learning. Like a convention, StudyCon celebrates accomplishments, offers venues for study, provides space for mindfulness and meditation, and supports emotional and physical well-being. In its holistic approach to learning and final exam preparation, StudyCon offers activities for the body, mind, and spirit.

StudyCon is held on the first floor of the library, where the ACE is located. The event uses the entire first-floor space, as well as an upstairs windowed space for sunset yoga. We keep track of student attendance through wrist bands. Once students receive their wrist bands, they can attend any activity. We have food throughout the night: regular pizza deliveries, trail-mix, popcorn, coffee, tea, water, and homemade cookies! We have drawings every half-hour for prizes donated by university departments, faculty, and staff. StudyCon starts with the Provisional Blessing, a short ecumenical prayer service. After the service, there are break-out sessions: therapy dogs; course-specific group study in math, chem, accounting, and econ; 15-minute massages (sign-up required); Counseling Services' de-stress activities; mindful meditation; study games; and sunset yoga. Throughout the night, students may explore a game room with puzzles, board games, and brain-teasers; a computer room for quiet work; a room for writing and discipline-specific tutoring; a private counseling session; and a paper-covered wall for writing prayer requests. StudyCon ends with late-night breakfast in the cafeteria.

Once COVID-19 forced all university work online, StudyCon appeared doomed for hiatus. However, with great ingenuity, OLLU's collaborative team created a website to offer

asynchronous activities akin to some of our standard offerings and kicked off final exams with a livestream on YouTube. Offering synchronous and asynchronous activities allowed us to meet student requests for both formats. StudyCon Online Spring 2020 included a 2-hour livestream of discussions on topics important to overall wellness in learning and life, such as study tips, mental health, meditation, community, OLLU resources, and online tutoring. Though StudyCon Online was very different from our normal offerings, it held strong to our goal of supporting students' success holistically, and the StudyCon website allows students the opportunity to revisit a yoga class, a prayer service, a faculty discussion, and other links to resources. Friends of OLLU can visit the Library website to see a few of our StudyCon Online events: https://libguides.ollusa.edu/studycon2020_;

Our collaborative team counts StudyCon Online Spring 2020 as a success. Not only did students tune in to the livestream, but people have been accessing the website during finals.

We revised StudyCon's usual physical gathering space to a virtual space that offers our students some much needed social, academic, and community support. The event brought us great joy.

Tutor Training

By Emily Edgerton

Science Learning Center, University of Michigan

Beginning March 2020, the University of Michigan Science Learning Center (SLC) tutor program transitioned all in person tutoring online using GoBoard. This created an immediate need to train the sixty tutors employed on how to tutor online. To meet this need, three one-

hour training sessions were developed. Tutors were required to attend two of the three training sessions, but were encouraged to attend all sessions if possible.

The first training session focused on how to use GoBoard and strategies for using active learning in an online tutor setting. Canvas discussion boards and GoBoard technology were used to facilitate this training. For the first half of training tutors were asked to do an internet search on active learning online and post their findings on Canvas. This was used to create a quick list of active learning techniques in online settings that tutors could refer back to at any time. The second half of the training was spent doing mock tutor sessions on GoBoard.

The second training covered two CRLA level 1 topics: learning styles/learning theories and critical thinking. Tutors logged into Zoom, where the Tutor Program Manager facilitated a mini review on the training topic. This review was kept very short because the intent was to get tutors to interact with the content and each other. Tutors responded to two Canvas discussion board prompts based on the mini lecture and a couple short activities. The primary critical feedback from the training was that there was not enough time for tutors to read through the Canvas discussion boards and write thoughtful responses.

For the third training, two CRLA level 1 topics were covered: handling difficult situations and ethics, but this time tutors were also given an extra 30 minutes to review and respond to the Canvas discussion board posts from the previous training. A week before this training, tutors submitted a difficult situation they encountered this term, specifically in an online setting. These situations were used to create case studies. During training, tutors were asked to work in small groups and write up a solution to their case study. Tutors then shared their case studies and written solutions on a Canvas discussion board so other tutors could read this material.

Doing three online tutor training sessions immediately after moving tutor services online was a tremendous undertaking. However, it was very important to give tutors a space to connect with each other online. By requiring interactions during these training sessions, tutors were able to critically problem solve the actual situations they were encountering online. While SLC professional staff were a great resource in helping tutors transition to working online, we found the tutors were the best source of information for each other. One piece of advice for practitioners creating online tutor training is to anticipate needing more time for tutors to interact in completing tasks, activities, and discussions. This was some of the most consistent feedback received from tutors after completing training.

Abstract/Summary for newsletter publishing: Article 1 Abstract: *Program Transition* details the way that the Science Learning Center (SLC) at the University of Michigan transitioned its

tutoring for 16 STEM courses in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The SLC addressed different logistics for appointment-based tutoring, drop-in tutoring, and innovative new communication practices. The primary goal was to ensure that all students knew that tutoring was still continuing despite the pandemic, and that services disrupted the normal activity of tutoring as minimally as possible.

Student & Staff Spotlight

Olivia Basant

By Emily Richardson

Center for Academic Success, University of West Georgia



Olivia Basant serves as a Peer Tutor in the Center for Academic Success at the University of West Georgia. She has served on staff with us for a year and half. What is most impressive about Olivia is her ability to tutor for 35 classes, and she does so with dedication and hard work. She is known for her incredible tutoring skills, and is consistently booked. Olivia is a role model within our program, and cares deeply about the students that she tutors. She has established a great rapport with all of her tutees, and is a tremendous asset to our program.

Student Leadership

By David Baca, Amy Caton & Laurissa Noack

Learning Commons, Texas A&M University Galveston Campus



Third Row: Kirsten Newbrough-Specialities Tutoring; Fred Ikler-Library; Grant Leal-Math Tutoring;

Second Row: Jamie Campos-Database Management; Adyson Hamburg-Sciences; Supplemental Instruction; Ashley Whitehouse-Library; Robyn Battles-The Studio; Lauren Mennen-Collection Services; Makannah Sanders-GIS

First Row: Jordan Sartor-Science Tutoring; Cole Massington-Martine Transportation; Klayton Simonette-Marketing; Kacie Swift-Writing

Leadership is not always easy. It can be challenging and rewarding, obscured and inspired. But it is an opportunity individuals take to make change in the worlds we inhabit. What leadership must not do is stop—offering connection to learning, forming teaching communities, bridging to the bigger picture, or modeling professional practices. The thirteen student leaders at the Texas A&M University Galveston Campus Learning Commons did not stop or miss a beat stepping up and in to design, train, and lead five peer-led programs and 70 student employees into the world of virtual, synchronous, peer-assisted instruction. They pulled together to:

- adapt tutor accessibility in TutorTrac using Zoom IDs without compromising the schedule
- created new video walkthroughs and pdf files teaching others how to use virtual teaching tools with students
- updated the student handbook with new video walkthroughs and pdf files
- Hosted a virtual hiring event
- Highlighted graduating seniors on social media
- Converted Annual Banquet online

Each remarkable leader showed commitment to The Learning Commons and A&M values and our teaching community: Excellence, Integrity, Leadership, Loyalty, Respect, and Selfless Service.

Our goodbyes and well wishes are heaped upon them from a safe distance but emanate from the core of our hearts for all the difficulties they have overcome, emotional vacillation they have managed, the loss of celebrations and award banquets they deserve and the uncertainty of graduating in this time, all through which they have dedicatedly worked with us to serve other students and faculty in need. To all of them, we celebrate their strength and dedication to working with us and know that they will be the leaders we need in the near future.

Supervisor Advisors: Overnight Implementation

By Lindsey Randolph

Academic Success Center, Texas A&M University



During Spring Break, President Young announced that classes and programming would move online. Luckily, my group of Tutor SA's (Supervisor Assistants) including Marco Bueso-Renteria, Santiago Quevedo, Pablo Romo, Irene Johnson, J Jesus Rodriguez Cruz, and Branden Salinas, were prepared for the challenge! We met on Monday following Spring Break to discuss, formed two teams, one team to code and one to train, and set to work.

All tutors would need training. Santiago, Branden, and Irene began by taking a university offered training on Zoom and developed a training for all tutors. This was followed by a practical where tutors were individually quizzed on Zoom functionality. Thanks to these three, by Saturday, all tutors were trained, quizzed, and ready!

Since our current scheduling system was dependent upon location, we could not move tutoring online without rescheduling all tutors. Pablo, J Jesus, and Marco set out to build a new scheduling system, which allowed me to reschedule in a matter of hours, and offer our highest demand classes at almost every hour—a significant improvement from previous drop-in tutoring. Furthermore, we were able to expand tutoring an additional 4 hours per day, Monday-Thursday.

While we are always adapting to our new Zoom reality, the success of the changes and implementation is outstanding. Since that first meeting we trained 40 tutors in Zoom, launched the program online, had 275 tutoring appointments—and excellent feedback from student.

Upcoming Events

NCLCA WEBINARS

Making the Learning Center the Nucleus
of a Learner-Centered Institution

Special Pricing for Webinars

During COVID-19 Event

[Register](#)

Kortschak Model-A multi-disciplinary approach

Friday, July 10

Julie Loppacher

University of Southern California

Yes! Supplemental Instruction (SI) Does Work Online

Friday, July 24

Kait Lamontagne & Matthew Mattox

University of Charleston & LSU

Online Learning Assistance by Design

Friday, August 14

Wendy Simmerman

Brigham Young University

M3: Monthly Member Meetings (12-1 PM EST)

We welcome you to talk through obstacles we are all facing during this unprecedented time.

June 17

July 15

August 19

September 16

October 14

November 18

Publications Updates

The Learning Assistance Review (TLAR)

Calling all higher education learning center leaders, *The Learning Assistance Review*, the peer-reviewed journal of the National College Learning Center Association, is open for submissions for a special issue, "Rising to the Challenge: Navigating COVID-19 as Higher Education Learning Center Leaders."



NATIONAL
COLLEGE LEARNING CENTER
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NCLCA

[More About TLAR](#)

Due July 31, 2020

Michael Frizell, Editor; TLAR@Missouristate.edu

What to send: Your story, A photo of you, A short 50-word biography

You may have seen a call for input from the editors of the *Writing Lab Newsletter: A Journal of Writing Center Scholarship* to share stories about how Writing Centers responded to the crisis. NCLCA is focused on the leadership of learning assistance centers and programming. To that extent, we now ask for your stories, vignettes, and anecdotes about how you, your center, your employees, or your institution met this challenge.

This isn't a request for research. We're looking for writing that helps us reflect on your role as a leader in this moment we're living in. Share your creativity and your ingenuity, your fears and your stress, and your stories of success.

Your story can be a few lines, a page, or dozens of pages. Be personal or distant. We don't mind. We're particularly interested in how learning center leaders rose to the challenge to ensure learning support continued during the crisis.

We'll create a special issue that we'll publish online in August and distribute it to our members in PDF format.

NCLCA Newsletter

The NCLCA Newsletter is mailed three or four times a year to the membership and publishes many different types of featured articles.

The editor encourages your contributions. You can now submit articles through the Membership Portal on the Publications Website:

<https://nclca.wildapricot.org/publications>



Learning Center Spotlight

Limited to 500 words and include a photo

Student & Staff Spotlight

Limited to 250 words and include a photo

Practitioner's Corner

Limited to 500 words and include techniques and strategies for building learning center programs

Book & Article Review

200-300 work reviews of books, articles, and key resources.

Affiliate's Corner

Organizational Officers can submit entries of 150 words and include a point-of-contact.

Submissions:

- Send to catona@nclca.org addressed to Amy Caton
- Attach image of the author and include title and name of institution
- Submissions subject to editing

Job Postings:

- Position Title
- Institution and location
- Application Link
- Deadline for application (if applicable)

Contact

Job Postings

Submit

Affiliate Updates



TxNCLCA

The newly formed Texas Affiliate of the National College Learning Center Association has been steadily working to get the organization up and running. Our first major stumbling block was getting the organization's official name approved by the State of Texas. Originally, we wanted to name ourselves "Texas College Learning Center Association" but there is a Texas College in Tyler, Texas and they did not want us to use the phrase "Texas College" in our organization's name. We went back to the drawing board and had our constituents vote on three new name options. We voted to use Texas Affiliate of the National College Learning Center Association using the acronym TxNCLCA. After a 6+ month-long paperwork process with the government and communication with our respective groups, we finally achieved non-profit status and then began working on developing a website. The website will allow us to accept membership fees, maintain an email listserv, provide links to key resources in our field, and offer a "member's only" area where members can read and post on discussion boards and share ideas and documents with each other. The onset of drastic changes caused by the Corona Virus dramatically impacted our board members' progress for several months. Board members are soon holding elections for the next cycle of officers and we're working to smoothly transition operations. We are grateful for everyone's patience as we work to get this organization going.

Lisa Johns, President TxNCLCA



SECLCA

Southeastern College Learning Center Association

The Southeastern College Learning Center Association (SECLCA) will be hosting a virtual conference in lieu of its annual in-person regional conference on Thursday, June 4th. This virtual conference will feature a keynote address from Dr. Stephanie Foote of the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education. The conference will also include its annual business meeting, concurrent sessions, a networking opportunity, and a panel, which will address COVID-19 from a learning center perspective. Our hope is by offering this virtual conference, learning center professionals **will build** a sense of community across the tristate area as well as **have** an opportunity to reflect, learn, and recharge as we prepare for the Fall 2020 semester.

Dr. Carol Adams, President SECLCA



The OCLCA board is hosting a monthly online video conversation. Join your colleagues in the state and local region in discussing your transition to topics including:

- Managing professional, paraprofessional, and student staff teams
- Communicating with colleagues and maintaining staff rapport
- Providing online learning support (Tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, Academic Coaching, etc.)

We look forward to seeing you soon! Meeting ID: 935 8303 5277

Alternatively please call +1 646 558 8656 or +1 301 715 8592 US Toll

[Click here for Zoom Meeting Invitation](#)

Stephanie Daniels, President OCLCA



In lieu of our annual spring conference, the Wisconsin College Learning Center Association (WCLCA) hosted online professional conversations for its membership. Board members facilitated three different discussion topics starting with “Online Tutoring Tools & Troubleshooting” on April 23rd. This initial conversation via Zoom focused on software programs and challenges for online learning and allowed participants to give feedback on their own online tool utilization and satisfaction level with those tools. The second professional conversation, “Features of the Online Tutoring Platform GoBoard,” took place via Blackboard Collaborate on May 7th and included a brief tutorial on some of the features of Collaborate, but primarily provided a thorough demonstration of the platform’s capabilities and the administration panel associated with it. Additionally, we discussed the pros and cons of the platform based on the facilitators’ experience with it over the past couple of months. “Lessons Learned & Using Those to Plan in Uncertain Times” was our third professional conversation on May 19th via WebEx. This was an open discussion forum on what we’ve learned from challenges we faced due to the pandemic and converting all of our services online. Each type of institution was asked to share specific challenges and takeaways from the semester and concerns they have moving into the fall semester.

An average of 30 participants joined each of the conversations. Due to feedback during the sessions and positive evaluations, WCLCA plans to continue providing these virtual opportunities for the membership going forward. Our current circumstances have forced us to get more comfortable with technology and consider new ways to network and collaborate. This new way of reaching our membership has shown us that distance does not preclude us from learning and connecting with each other.

Jessica Spanbauer, WCLCA President



The Missouri affiliate of NCLCA, MoCLCA, had to postpone their Spring Conference scheduled at MU and are working on moving that planned conference to 2021. In the meantime, they are planning a virtual annual membership meeting on Monday, July 27 at 9 AM. The tentative agenda will include a board update, a 10-15 minute presentation regarding supporting our student workers dealing with the trauma of current events, a presentation discussion time, and then an open time for those in attendance to chat with others about their learning center issues.

MoCLCA is also seeking nominations for Vice President, who will serve a 3 year term. Nominations due by June 15. Election date are June 16-26.

The Vice-President shall:

- a) Assume the duties of the President in the President's absence;
- b) Chair the Professional Development Committee which includes coordination of affiliate annual meeting/conference;
- c) Coordinate any other professional development activities;
- d) Assume the office of President after serving one year as Vice-President.

Contact Diana Garland (DianaGarland@MissouriState.edu) or Stephanie Hopkins (Hopkins-S@mssu.edu) for additional information.

Thanks for being a member!

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