

**York College of Pennsylvania  
Learning Resource Center  
Long Range Strategic Plan 2009-2012**

## **LRC Mission and Goal Statement**

To create a teaching and learning environment that offers academic support programs characterized by collaborative learning opportunities, encouragement of lifelong learning, and attention to critical thinking skills.

Intended Outcomes/Results:

1. The LRC will offer learning support services that address student needs for assistance with writing, mathematics, and study skills.
2. The LRC will offer assistance for students with disabilities that will support their scheduled course activities.
3. The LRC staff will offer students collaborative learning opportunities for selected courses, which will enhance the learning skills of all the participants.

## **Overview & Major Projects**

For the next three years, the LRC will focus on proposals that enhance the following initiatives:

- increase student and faculty engagement with each other in their coursework and thereby potentially enhance student retention.
- enhance the quality, quantity, and variety of the tutoring/study group services
- create a suitable environment to support the growing implementation and use of academic support programs

These proposed initiatives evolved as a result of collective input from the following sources:

- the 2008 faculty survey
- three faculty advisory groups (writing, math, and IRC)
- surveys and small group discussions with LRC tutors
- survey of LRC clients
- survey of 1<sup>st</sup> year students in 8 writing classes

### **I. Writing Assistance**

#### Ongoing

The Writing Center's goal is to offer a variety of resources that will help students become confident, thoughtful writers in all disciplines.

The LRC

- offers one-on-one assistance by appointment with peer or professional tutors to support writing across the curriculum.
- offers writing workshops which focus on students' immediate concerns with their writing assignments.
- links the peer writing tutors (Writing Fellows) to specific writing-intensive courses across the disciplines.
- invites WRT 100 faculty to require their students to meet with tutors
- offers a Writing Lab for drop-in assistance
- offers phone consultations for students who commute.
- offers opportunities for all writing tutors to attend a regional conference in order to learn the newest tutoring pedagogy and meet tutors from other colleges.
- offers peer tutors the opportunity to learn more about writing pedagogy through research opportunities, internships, and other experiences in the Writing Center.

### Proposed

1. increase the number of peer writing tutors and their availability to visit more classes and provide assistance for writing assignments.  
 Rationale: faculty and students across the disciplines have requested additional writing assistance both in and out of the classroom.
2. increase the professional support for the writing center by appointing a Writing Center Coordinator to focus on the administrative tasks of overseeing the writing assistance programs, as well as guiding and training the peer tutors.  
 Rationale: the writing tutors will be implementing new writing assistance programs across the disciplines and will need a professional dedicated to providing them with leadership and guidance
3. pilot "Tutors-on-Call" program, which will offer senior peer tutors the opportunity to create and implement a program composed of peer writing tutors who specialize in tutoring specific skills (e.g. how to cite in APA Style) and who, at the request of instructors from across the disciplines, will visit classes to give mini-lessons or help with small group work, when appropriate. Under the guidance of the Writing Center Coordinator, the senior tutors will train the peer tutors, explain the service to the faculty, and coordinate the tutor visits.  
 Rationale: faculty of writing-intensive courses request tutor visits into the classroom in order to increase their students' engagement with utilizing the tutors as a resource, and this program will give the students & faculty an opportunity to preview the support services offered in the LRC
4. create a Writing Lab with a "Writing Help Desk" by designating the computer lab in Hum 06 as a space for interactive writing assistance  
 Rationale: both the tutors and their clients have requested that the Writing Center develop its own identity & space because the LRC has become a high-traffic area

## **II. Math Assistance**

### Ongoing

The Math Center's goal is to offer academic support that will promote student success in mathematics courses, as well as proficient critical thinking skills for daily life.

### The LRC

- offers one-on-one mathematical assistance by appointment with peer tutors and a professional tutor.
- offers peer-led study groups for students in need of further explanation and practice with mathematical content learned in their math courses.
- invites MAT 102 faculty to require their students to meet with tutors
- offers opportunities for tutors to attend regional math conferences/workshops in order to learn the newest tutoring pedagogy and meet other tutors in the field.
- offers students the opportunity to learn more about math and teaching math through research opportunities, internships, and other experiences.
- offers math placement testing on a limited basis

### Proposed

1. pilot "Tutors-on-Call" program, which will offer senior peer tutors the opportunity to create and implement a program composed of peer math tutors who specialize in tutoring specific skills (e.g. how to use a graphing calculator) and who, at the request of math instructors, will visit classes to give mini-lessons or to help with small group work, when appropriate. Under the guidance of the Math Tutor Coordinator, the senior tutors will train the peer tutors, explain the service to the faculty, and coordinate the tutor visits.  
 Rationale: faculty of math courses request tutor visits into the classroom in order to increase their students' engagement with utilizing the tutors as a resource, and this program will provide students and faculty opportunity to preview the support offered in the LRC
2. MAT 120 Coaching Sessions – MAT 120 Professors will require their students whose grades are 60-69% to participate in weekly review sessions with tutors trained specifically to assist these

students. Although a specific population of MAT 120 students will be targeted, the sessions will be advertised and available to all MAT 120 students

Rationale: MAT 120 has the lowest retention rate of all math courses.

### III. Tutors/Study Groups in Other Disciplines

#### Ongoing

The LRC's goal is to offer students collaborative learning opportunities with their peers that will enhance the learning skills of all the participants. Faculty members select the courses which are supported and recommend potential tutors/study group leaders.

The LRC

- offers student leaders who provide scheduled study group sessions for selected courses.
- offers one-on-one appointments and drop-in conferences with peer tutors for selected courses.

#### Proposed

1. offer faculty the opportunity to invite peer tutors to join them in class to help with group work when appropriate, with emphasis on providing support to first-year courses that serve as a gateway into a major

Rationale: will increase engagement of first-year students with successful upperclassmen who have declared their major and who tutor for those courses, which may positively impact student retention

2. locate tutoring/review sessions in departmental spaces when appropriate

Rationale: will increase student/tutor/faculty interaction due to more convenient location adjacent to faculty offices, classrooms, and labs within a student's "academic house"

### IV. Study Skills Assistance

#### Ongoing

The LRC's goal is to offer study skills assistance to students that will enhance their likelihood of academic success for all of their coursework.

The LRC

- offers study skills workshops on a variety of topics (time management, reading and note-taking skills, test-taking techniques, reducing test anxiety) at a variety of times during fall and spring semesters.
- offers one-on-one assistance by appointment with a professional Study Skills Specialist to address students' specific academic challenges with study skills.
- offers a library of resource materials on study skills topics.
- offers an Orientation presentation that encourages students to begin their academic careers with beneficial study habits.
- offers workshops designed specifically for selected groups (e.g. nursing students, scholarship recipients) to enhance their likelihood of academic success.
- provides orientation sessions for Back-on-Track and YCCOSP students

### V. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

#### Ongoing

The LRC's goal is to offer assistance for students with disabilities that will support their scheduled course activities.

The LRC

- offers a test-proctoring service for students with disabilities who are eligible for extended time or a distraction-free environment during their exams.
- collaborates with the Disabilities Coordinator in the Advising Office to offer other accommodations for students who are eligible (e.g. text-book reading, oral exams).

## VI. Technology in the LRC

### Ongoing

The LRC encourages face-to-face interaction among students. When students request long-distance services, the staff provides phone consultations. However, computers are available in the LRC for students and tutors to use during their consultations.

The LRC

- has 24 computers, a printer, and a photocopier.
- offers students an online appointment system for one-on-one appointments in study skills, math and writing.
- explains its services on the official York College of Pennsylvania web site
- requests installation of specific software from IT department that supports students' coursework

## VII. Physical Facilities

The LRC is located in Hum 01, Hum 08, and Hum 06. LRC services are also being offered in the Library and various lab spaces around campus.

The LRC consists of

- 24 computers
- 30 tables and 60 chairs
- A large open room, two cubicles, a study group room, a writing lab, an exam room, and three offices

### Proposed

1. increase size of facilities to provide more tutoring tables/cubicles (as space and funding becomes available)

Rationale: both tutors and LRC clients have identified the need to provide additional tutoring spaces beyond the main room

## VIII. Student Outreach

### Ongoing

The LRC uses the following outreach to make students, faculty, and administrators aware of academic support services:

- brochures & bookmarks in the orientation folders of incoming freshmen and transfer students
- brochures & bookmarks of the various services for other targeted audiences, including faculty
- update newsletters sent each semester to every full-time and part-time faculty
- updated web pages on the College site
- signs on bulletin boards in campus buildings
- letters sent to students on academic probation
- emails to all students about tutors' availability
- announcements in *Daily Bulletin*
- advertisements in *The Spartan*
- advertisements on the college radio station
- advertisements on the campus TV monitors
- orientation visits to many of the core writing and math classes

Proposed

1. report patterns of student usage to program coordinators and department chairs at the end of each month
  - Rationale: will provide regular feedback to faculty and invite more input from faculty about LRC usage

**IX. Staff**Ongoing

The LRC employs

- one full-time Director all year
- one part-time Assistant Director (20 hours/week fall & spring semesters)
- one Math Coordinator (13 hours/week fall & spring semesters)
- one full time Secretary (fall & spring semesters)
- 6 part-time Learning Support Specialists (10 hours/week fall & spring)
- 50-75 peer tutors
- two student assistants (10 hours/week each)

Proposed

1. increase size of both professional and peer staff (as funding becomes available) to meet student and faculty requests for services
  - Rationale: will enable the LRC to effectively respond to requests for services from both faculty and students.

**X. Outcomes Assessment**Ongoing

The LRC measures the effectiveness of its programs by reporting

- patterns of usage
- results of anonymous student surveys of LRC clients that measure satisfaction with the services.

Proposed

1. with the assistance of the Director of Institutional Research, annually survey the entire student body to find out if the LRC services are meeting student needs
  - Rationale: will provide feedback from all students about LRC services, not just from those who use the services

## Progress Update of LRC 2009-2012 Long Range Plan as of September 15, 2009

### 1. Writing Assistance

#### Proposed

Increase the number of peer writing tutors and their availability to visit more classes and provide assistance for writing assignments.

**Progress:** as of fall 2009, the Writing Center employs 17 peer tutors and 5 professional tutors, an increase of 5 peer tutors from fall 2008.

Increase the professional support for the writing center by appointing a Writing Center Coordinator to focus on the administrative tasks of overseeing the writing assistance programs, as well as guiding and training the peer tutors.

**Progress:** the English and Humanities department continues to propose an instructor position that includes responsibilities for coordinating the Writing Center.

Pilot "Tutors-on-Call" program, which will offer senior peer tutors the opportunity to create and implement a program composed of peer writing tutors who specialize in tutoring specific skills (e.g. how to cite in APA Style) and who, at the request of instructors from across the disciplines, will visit classes to give mini-lessons or help with small group work, when appropriate. Under the guidance of the Writing Center Coordinator, the senior tutors will train the peer tutors, explain the service to the faculty, and coordinate the tutor visits.

**Progress:** a group of senior Writing Fellows are currently surveying faculty in other disciplines to find out their need for Writing Center assistance. The next step will be to develop a plan for meeting those needs.

Create a Writing Lab with a "Writing Help Desk" by designating the computer lab in Hum 06 as a space for interactive writing assistance

**Progress:** the current group of Writing Fellows do not wish to separate themselves from the LRC main room, so students have been instructed to go into the LRC if they have a question.

### 2. Math Assistance

#### Proposed

Pilot "Tutors-on-Call" program, which will offer senior peer tutors the opportunity to create and implement a program composed of peer math tutors who specialize in tutoring specific skills (e.g. how to use a graphing calculator) and who, at the request of math instructors, will visit classes to give mini-lessons or to help with small group work, when appropriate. Under the guidance of the Math Tutor Coordinator, the senior tutors will train the peer tutors, explain the service to the faculty, and coordinate the tutor visits.

**Progress:** the Tutors on Call program was presented to the MAT 11 and MAT 102 faculty in fall 2009, and the tutors have been visiting the classes held in the computer labs to help with MyMathLab and giving tours of the LRC.

MAT 120 Coaching Sessions – MAT 120 Professors will require their students whose grades are 60-69% to participate in weekly review sessions with tutors trained specifically to assist these students. Although a specific population of MAT 120 students will be targeted, the sessions will be advertised and available to all MAT 120 students

**Progress:** the MAT 120 Coaching sessions were implemented in spring 09. Dr. Troutman assessed the effectiveness of the program and recommended that they continue, so they are running in the fall 09 semester as well.

### 3. Tutors/Study Groups in Other Disciplines

#### Proposed

Offer faculty the opportunity to invite peer tutors to join them in class to help with group work when appropriate, with emphasis on providing support to first-year courses that serve as a gateway into a major

**Progress:** two departments have placed tutors in the classrooms with professors during class, the physical sciences department and the business department.

Locate tutoring/review sessions in departmental spaces when appropriate

**Progress:** all of the tutors were invited to consider what locations would work best for their tutoring situation. Most decided to stay in the LRC facility, but the nursing and engineering tutors decided to locate tutoring in their department spaces.

## 7. Physical Facility

### Proposed

Increase size of facilities to provide more tutoring tables/cubicles (as space and funding becomes available)

**Progress:** the LRC is temporarily assigned the use of Room 7 and is making frequent use of it.

## 8. Outreach

### Proposed

Report patterns of student usage to program coordinators and department chairs at the end of each month

**Progress:** This initiative will begin in fall 09.

## 9. Staff

### Proposed

Increase size of both professional and peer staff (as funding becomes available) to meet student and faculty requests for services

**Progress:** The LRC staff size fluctuates as the semester progress. The progress of this initiative will be measured at the end of the academic year.

## 10. Outcomes Assessment

### Proposed

With the assistance of the Director of Institutional Research, annually survey the entire student body to find out if the LRC services are meeting student needs

**Progress:** The progress of this initiative will be measured at the end of the academic year.