Academic Success Center

ANNUAL REPORT

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Greetings!

I am proud to present the annual report of the Academic Success Center for 2015-16. We've seen over 12,000 students this year in pursuit of our mission to connect students to information, skills, and resources that will enhance their academic performance and help them graduate successfully from Texas A&M. And we continue to reach more of them every year. As these pages show, we offer an impressive range of resources to meet individual needs: workshops and courses on study strategies, time, management, motivation, and career choice; Supplemental Instruction; tutoring; academic coaching; and support for transfer students and for developmental students. We'd like to thank our partners in Student Affairs and at the Association of Former Students for supporting our efforts and helping us get students to the resources they need.

About a year ago, I began working with Assistant Provost Jim Kracht, the founder and Executive Director of the Academic Success Center. Jim wanted me to take his position when he retired. We share some philosophical tendencies and pedagogical allegiances in the realm of student learning. We both value research on cognition, understand learning occurs as a social process in a social context, and believe basic qualitative and literacy skills are foundational, but none of this is more important than motivation, self-efficacy, and engagement.

So I started out to learn about the Academic Success Center. How little I knew, I only discovered six months into actually taking the position. I also realized how little Texas A&M at large, and especially faculty and students, know about this gem of a resource. This report on our activities and accomplishments during the 2015-16 academic year, then, is one way to get the word out. I invite you to read it and share it so that you, like me, will learn more about what we do. You'll get the big picture—how much we are growing, what we've achieved, and what we have yet to accomplish. You'll see that Texas A&M students are struggling and striving to achieve their best academic performance, and that we are here to help make that happen.

Although Jim retired in January of 2016, I believe he would be proud of the strong performance of the staff and specialists who have continued to enact his vision—the instructors, academic coaches, tutors, mentors, and many others who keep the Academic Success Center humming with activity. We'll be sending him his copy of the 2015-16 report with pride. In fact, we're hoping it will initiate a visit from him. We hope you'll stop by as well, to our office on the 9th and 10th floor. We'd love to show you how we do it.

Dr. Valerie Balester

Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Studies and Executive Director, Academic Success Center & University Writing Center

“We’ve seen over 12,000 students this year in pursuit of our mission to connect students to information, skills, and resources that will enhance their academic performance and help them graduate successfully from Texas A&M”
2015-16 Highlights

- 12,322 students participated in at least one ASC program. This was approximately 25% of the undergraduate students enrolled at A&M and was a 24% increase in ASC participation over the 2014-15 academic year.
- We developed and launched StudyHUB, an academic support website that links students with tutoring and academic support services from 22 offices across campus.
- We provided drop-in tutoring at six different locations on campus.
- Transfer Student Programs began offering Virtual Office Hours with Transfer Mentors to help accommodate busy transfer students.
- The A&M Association of Former Students provided $55,000 in funding to help support ASC Supplemental Instruction and tutoring.
- A total of 2,849 students attended Fresh Start orientation sessions as part of requirements for academic probation.
- 4,049 students were referred to the ASC for completion of a Success Plan.
- ASC staff presented to 17 separate Aggie Mother’s clubs in Texas and made classroom presentations to approximately 1,300 students.
- ASC provided Gateway courses, Academic Coaching, SI, and tutoring services to approximately 400 Gateway students.
- Working with the Athletic Department, the ASC developed a Summer Bridge Program for incoming student athletes.
- The TSI program helped insure that 68% of developmental students were college ready within one semester and 81% within two semesters.
Academic Coaching

Academic coaches work one-on-one to help any and all students learn to the best of their ability. Coaches help them identify roadblocks to their academic success and develop an action plan to meet their goals. Their goal is to help students improve in areas such as time management and effective learning strategies. Students can schedule appointments on-line or by calling the office.

Highlights (2015-16)
✓ A total of 2,468 students participated in Academic Coaching completing 4,844 coaching appointments.
✓ 1,352 students on probation chose Academic Coaching for their Success Plan option.
✓ 87.5% of students who completed a Success Plan with a coach showed improvement in academic standing.
✓ In addition to one-on-one coaching sessions, ASC Academic Coaches led Wednesday Workshops and helped facilitate Commit to Success workshops.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE SAYING

The Academic Success Center helped me tremendously in improving my GPA and helping me with my study skills. Unfortunately, I was required to attend because I was not meeting SAP. Fortunately, I had a great coach that got me on track and I was able to pass all of my classes and improve my GPA through the semester! I plan on returning again next semester even though it is no longer required of me.

Freshman Animal Science Major
Instructional Programs

The ASC offers full semester courses, workshop series, and topical workshops each semester. These courses and workshops cover a variety of topics, but the overall objective is to help students better understand how people learn and to help students develop effective learning strategies.

Highlights (2015-16)

✓ Total enrollment in ASC courses was 1133.
✓ 60 sessions of the “Commit to Success” workshop series were offered throughout the fall and spring semesters with a total enrollment of 1,471 students.
✓ Provided STLC 101 and 289 courses for Athletic Department Summer Bridge Program and Gateway Program during Summer 2016.
✓ Students received approximately 43,431 contact hours of instruction.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE SAYING

I just wanted to thank you for a great semester! I learned a lot of valuable study habits that will set me up for success here at A&M. I really enjoyed the "learn what type of learner" lessons you put together. Those series of lessons were the most beneficial to me as a freshman student, for I got to see what type of learner I really am. Professors in my opinion do not get enough recognition for what they do, not only for this University, but also for the individual aggie lives they impact each and every day. I hope this email brightens your day! Have a great week, and may peace be with you and your family.

Change in term GPA for Students Attending "Commit to Success" Workshop Series (Spring 2016)
Supplemental Instruction

SI is a program to help students become successful in lower-level, core curriculum courses that have traditionally been difficult. It provides students with three 50 minute, peer facilitated study sessions each week. The facilitator (SI Leader) is a student who has previously taken the course and has been successful.

Highlights (2015-16)

✓ 11,081 students attended a total of 54,563 SI sessions.
✓ SI supported summer 2015 Gateway program with six SI sections.
✓ In Spring 2016, students who regularly attended SI (10 or more times during the semester) made a C or higher in the course 90% of the time compared to only 77% for students who did not attend SI.
✓ In Summer of 2016, students who attended SI 10+ times averaged a 3.36 in their SI course compared to a 2.88 for those who did not attend SI.

% of A, B, or C grades by SI Attendance (Spring 2016)

WHAT STUDENTS ARE SAYING

After going to SI sessions, my understanding of organic chemistry began to improve rapidly. I think that going to the SI sessions is one of the primary reasons why I passed!

Caleb was the best SI I have ever had. He worked so hard, and really cared about how well we were understanding what was going on. It was really great to be able to learn things in class, and then apply them in SI. SI is one of the big reasons I did so well in this class because it forced me to check three nights a week whether I was understanding the material, rather than find out what I don't understand two days before the test.
Study HUB is a website that provides a searchable directory of on-campus academic support for courses all across the Texas A&M campus. Students can search StudyHUB by subject area, type of support, or location to find help. Currently, StudyHUB supports over 250 courses.

Highlights (2015-16)

✓ Study HUB was developed by the ASC team in conjunction with the Provost’s IT Office during spring and summer of 2016.
✓ The site was launched in September, 2016.
✓ ASC staff distributed 2,000 “StudyHUB” cookies to our campus partners to thank them for participation and to announce the launch.
✓ Within the first semester, StudyHUB had almost 16,000 page views and over 8,800 unique visitors.
✓ There were a total of 22 campus partners who participated in StudyHUB.

StudyHUB.tamu.edu

Boxes of StudyHUB cookies ready to distribute across campus.
Texas Success Initiative

The Texas Success Initiative (TSI) is designed to help academically underprepared students achieve the necessary skills to succeed in college-level course work. The focus is on math, reading, and writing skills. Instruction, for the most part, is one-on-one and individualized.

Highlights (2015-16)

✓ 9 new tutors were hired to work with developmental math students.
✓ Individualized education plans were developed for each student to address specific academic weakness.
✓ An integrated reading and writing course was developed to help students with greatest needs.
✓ 68% of developmental students achieved college readiness within 1 semester and 81% were college-ready within 2 semesters.
✓ A graduate assistant was hired to oversee math lab.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE SAYING

What I liked about [this program] was the actual one-on-one basis we had with the tutors, the ability to ask about what we didn’t know.

I’ve applied the skills of taking my time to work things out in other courses…

[I liked the…] individual attention put on individual needs. The instructors never made anyone feel less. They were always very positive.

[I liked …] the tutors and the level of passion they present to the students and how they build friendships with us.

New Fall 2015 TSI Students After 1st Year
Transfer Student Program

Transfer students are not new to the college experience nor are they freshmen. They are veterans, nontraditional students, international students, and others who have been successful academically prior to coming to Texas A&M. TSP provide mentoring, academic help, social opportunities and other programs to help transfer students maintain their confidence and fill in the gaps academically as needed.

TSP Participation by College

Highlights (2015-16)

✓ TSP mentors called and welcomed 1,623 incoming transfer students during summer 2016.
✓ Tau Sigma Honor Society for transfer students inducted 137 new members.
✓ 259 students attended Fall 2016 Welcome Dinner.
✓ Work began with 199 Engineering Academy Students for Fall 2016.
✓ Virtual office hours and expanded mentor sessions were instituted.
✓ The TSP Blog was introduced in Spring 2016.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE SAYING

My (TSP) mentor has helped me out more than anyone knows.

Patrick, Transfer Student

With the help of the Transfer Mentor program I was able to find so many resources on campus that really benefitted me. The mentors within the program are so encouraging and really want to help transfer students.

Preston, Transfer Student

I decided to participate in the TSP because I wanted something to refer to when I came across a hurdle.

Tripp, Transfer Student
Tutoring

Tutoring is designed to assist students in understanding course content they may not have understood in class, while also teaching valuable learning and study skills. Students can expect to receive assistance for their immediate needs and acquire the tools necessary to take charge of their future learning.

Highlights (2015-16)

- Tutoring was offered in Tutor Zone locations, five days a week: Hullabaloo, White Creek Apartments, Rudder Tower, and Evans Library.
- The tutoring program began offering limited one-on-one appointment tutoring to students needed extra help.
- Tutoring had a total of 5,612 visits during Fall & Spring semesters, which was a 37% increase over 2014-15.
- Tutoring supported 88 different courses in 26 separate subject areas including physics, chemistry, engineering, math, economics, political science, psychology, and biology.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE SAYING

The times I have attended tutoring have been helpful. I received help not only on the class that I came for, but I also learned different ways to prepare for future exams which I can apply to all of my classes.

- Justin '16

The free tutoring really helped me break down concepts from class I didn’t completely understand. It’s a great place to ask questions since you work with a fellow Aggie who has already completed your class!

- Jacinda '17
PROBATION STUDENT SUCCESS

During the 2015-16 Academic Year, a total of 4,295 students on probation were referred to the ASC to complete a Success Plan.

Of these, a total of 2,848 (66%) of these students attended a Fresh Start orientation session where they chose one of three options for completing a Success Plan: STLC 101 Application of Learning Theories to College Studies, Commit to Success workshop series, or Academic Coaching.

2,367 of the referred students successfully completed a Success Plan. The charts that follow highlight the success of students who completed a Success Plan with the ASC.

Change in Term GPA for Spring 2016 Probation Students

- No or minimal contact (n= 650)
- Incomplete Success Plan (n= 108)
- Completed Success Plan (n=1449)
Improvement in Term GPA by Success Plan Option (Spring 2016)

- None (n=141): 0.29
- STLC 101 (n=13): 0.92
- Commit to Success (n=338): 0.53
- Coaching (n=313): 0.58

Percentage Improvement in Cumulative GPA by Success Plan Option (Spring 2016)

- None (n=302): 42.20%
- Coaching (n=723): 71.10%
- Commit to Success (n=769): 68.80%
- STLC 101 (n=49): 81.60%