

Table of Contents

I. MISSION	4
1. Write an introductory paragraph describing the Unit and support services provided. What is the Unit trying to accomplish?	4
2. Describe how the Unit’s mission is aligned with the University of San Francisco’s Mission and strategic priorities.	4
II. HISTORY	6
1. What is the recent history of the administrative and / or service Unit and what are the most noteworthy changes? What changes have taken place since the last program review (if appropriate)?..	6
2. What is the relationship of the administrative/service Unit to academic programs and other administrative units within the University (e.g., interdisciplinary programs, research centers, etc.)? ...	10
3. Does the Unit form partnerships with other Units within the university? (e.g., academic or non-academic)? If so, how is the work coordinated within and across the various units?	11
4. What were the main recommendations of the previous program review? How did the Unit and institutional administration respond to the earlier findings and recommendations? What changed after the last program review?	12
5. If this is the first program review, discuss the origins of the Unit. Why was the Unit created?	12
a. GLEESON LIBRARY	13
b. UNIVERSITY MINISTRY	14
III. ADMINISTRATIVE/SERVICE UNIT GOALS	15
1. List the goals that will allow the Unit to fulfill its mission. Please provide a curriculum map aligning the University Mission, Unit goals, and the services provided.....	15
2. For each goal list measurable objectives (it’s not about the number of goals or outcomes but rather about generating evidence that support the Unit fulfill its stipulated mission). That is, what a student should know, do and value as a result of utilizing the services.	16
3. How do these goals facilitate the Unit’s overarching mission geared toward supporting student learning, development and/or academic success?	17
IV. QUALITY ASSURANCE	17
1. What services/products does the Unit provide? Whom do they serve?	17
2. How does the Unit learn about the needs of those served and obtain feedback regarding service delivery?	21
3. How does the Unit know it is meeting the stakeholder’s needs?	21
4. What are the Unit’s planning, decision-making, and evaluation processes?	25
5. How do stakeholders learn about and access the services/products provided by the Unit?	25

6. How does the Administrative/Services Units compare with peer institutions in terms of structure, responsibilities, size and budget? Specify the criteria by which these institutions were selected for comparison.....	26
V. BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES	28
1. Provide a budget allocation and expenditure summary for the past three fiscal years.....	28
2. To what extent does the allocation of resources allow the Administrative/Service Unit to meet its goals and objectives? Is there a close alignment between the costs of running the Unit and budgeted resources?	29
3. What changes could be made to produce greater efficiencies or economics of scale (e.g., reduction, modification, elimination of paperwork, reorganization)? What constraints must the Unit address to achieve these?	29
4. What improvements are possible through reallocating existing resources?.....	30
5. What improvements can only be addressed through additional resources?	30
VI. ASSESSMENT: IMPACT ON STUDENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT, AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS	31
1. Provide a summary of how critical administrative processes and/or the services are assessed or evaluated in the Unit, and the results of those evaluations.	31
2. List the number of students using the services provided during the most recent academic year, and the Unit's role in tracking their success upon completion of the service.	32
3. To what degree have you achieved Unit goals and outcomes?.....	34
a. Describe how data gleaned from meaningful assessments have helped the Unit improve critical processes, Unit key functions, stakeholder needs, delivery of services and identification of best practices (continuous improvement).....	34
b. Describe how data collected are used to inform and support other Academic and Non-Academic Units in the Institution.....	37
c. Describe how staff/administrator in the Unit analyzes trends of Unit productivity (e.g., students serviced, tracking student success in academic programs, etc.).....	37
d. Describe changes made to the Administrative/Services Unit using evaluation/assessment data. ...	39
4. What factors have facilitated or impeded the Unit's ability to meet its goals and outcomes?	42
5. How do faculty/staff roles support the Unit's delivery of services? Gaps?	43
VII. GUIDE FOR THE FUTURE.....	44
1. What are the Unit's strengths? What examples of long-term excellence, recent accomplishment, or improvement characterize the Unit's recent history? In what ways	44
could the Unit be considered a leader in its field?.....	44
2. What are the Unit's weaknesses? Where could the Unit improve most? What challenges or obstacles make it difficult to overcome these weaknesses? What further challenges does the faculty foresee in the coming years?	45

3. What changes have occurred in administrative processes and/or services provided over the past five years that have influenced the Unit's view of its role in the University and the field?	48
VIII. PLANS FOR THE FUTURE	49
1. Describe where the staff would like the Unit to go in terms of services, performance	49
standards, collaboration with other units, synergies, etc.	49
2. Describe where the field going based on the literature, professional association meetings, etc. and how the Unit is ready to address those challenges and improvements.	52

I. MISSION

1. Write an introductory paragraph describing the Unit and support services provided. What is the Unit trying to accomplish?

The Learning Center was founded in 1993 with the support of a grant from the Irvine Foundation. The original initiative focused on tutorial services for the undergraduate student body with a focus on underrepresented populations. The center now serves about 1000 undergraduate, Masters, and Doctoral students each semester. As USF's student population has grown, the Learning Center developed group-based course-specific academic support programs such as Supplemental Instruction and Peer Led Team Learning in order to more efficiently serve more students. America Reads and other programs aligned with the university mission provide much-needed opportunities for USF students to develop tutoring and other career-preparation skills while earning income. The Center has also offered skills development coaching and workshops for many years, but now has Project Success, the Student Success Workshops Series and other structured programs to serve students with academic skills deficits. Finally, special programs for International students have been developed to help serve this growing population.

2. Describe how the Unit's mission is aligned with the University of San Francisco's Mission and strategic priorities.

The mission of the Learning Center is to provide students opportunities to increase and enhance their academic skills and abilities through cultivating effective learning practices. We support investment in learning and studying and respect individual learning styles. We believe in creating an environment that is conducive to learning as well as serving as role models. With the goal of creating lifelong learners, we strive to support students' endeavors towards self-confidence and higher academic achievement and performance.

The Learning Center:

- Provides academic support and study skills coaching to students;
- Creates an environment conducive to collaborative learning;
- Assists students in learning about individual learning styles and how best to use them to support their own learning;
- Fosters student achievement and development by referring students to appropriate campus resources

The University's and Learning Center's missions are closely aligned. As part of the Vision, Mission, and Values Statement, the University states that it strives to *"distinguish itself as a diverse, socially responsible learning community of high quality scholarship and academic rigor..."* ([USF Vision, Mission and Values website](#)). The Learning Center's mission supports the University's by *"supporting investment in learning and studying...respect[ing] individual learning styles, and creating an environment conducive to learning"* ([Learning and Writing Center Website](#)). The Learning Center serves as a supportive learning community to all students, including tutors. Our tutoring programs and services support the university's core value of *"advancing...learning as a humanizing, social activity rather than a competitive exercise"* ([USF VMV webpage](#)). The Learning Center also supports the university's core values of *"advancing: ...diversity of perspectives, experiences and traditions as essential components of a quality education in our global context"* ([VMV webpage](#)) by hiring and training a diverse (professional and student) staff from varying ethnic and racial, socioeconomic, educational, generational, and sociocultural backgrounds. In alignment with the USF's core values: *"the full, integral development of each person and all persons, with the belief that no individual or group may rightfully prosper at the expense of the others"* ([VMV webpage](#)), the staff is trained not only to

bring in their own experiences but to also respect and utilize the students' experiences in the learning process. Finally, the Center supports “*a culture of service that respects and promotes the dignity of every person*” ([VMV webpage](#)) not only through our work with USF students but also through the work that our student tutors in the America Reads and Families and Youth In Transition programs do with underserved communities and student populations in the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD)

II. HISTORY

1. What is the recent history of the administrative and / or service Unit and what are the most noteworthy changes? What changes have taken place since the last program review (if appropriate)?

In the last five years, the Learning Center leadership structure has changed to include a Director and Assistant Director rather than Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator. We have therefore changed some processes which are described below. The Learning Center continues to employ an all student staff for tutoring and administrative support, and we have also begun to incorporate graduate students from the Higher Education and Student Affairs (HESA) Program through the School of Education in many of our programs.

TutorTrac

In 2009 Learning Center staff began tracking appointments online by using the TutorTrac software system. TutorTrac has made scheduling and appointment tracking for the Writing Center (housed with the Learning Center), Peer Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction programs simpler and more accurate. Learning Center operations have become more efficient now that students and tutors can connect and make their own appointments online without the intervention

of the front desk staff. Of course, there are many “bugs” in the system for which we continue to seek improvements and/or alternative software.

Community Outreach Programs

In the fall of 2009 we added the Families & Youth in Transition program to our tutor outreach services. Through a partnership with the San Francisco Unified School District, USF students are hired and trained to provide tutoring support to homeless and transitional youth. To aid in the coordination of this program a 20 hour-a -week graduate student position was created and is currently filled by a HESA graduate intern.

Supplemental Instruction

In 2012 we converted the Supplemental Instruction (SI) Lead position (an undergraduate position) to a graduate internship with the intent of providing greater leadership, support and training to the SI leaders and the program. The SI Intern is responsible for hiring, training and supervising the SI leaders in accordance with the [University of Missouri - Kansas City \(UMKC\) SI model](#). The SI graduate assistant is also responsible for reporting and the further growth of the program. Due to budgetary constraints and concerns about attendance numbers, however, we have not been able to expand the program.

Peer Tutoring

In 2012 the Peer Tutoring Program completed the renewal of its Five-Year College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) Certification (<http://crla.net/index.php/certifications/about-crla-certifications>) for levels I, II, and III. In the

process, the Learning Center also revamped its training model to create a more thorough and consistent training for new and returning tutors each semester. See Appendix for [Training Manual](#).

Project Success

Project Success, an intensive academic support program for academically underprepared students, has grown significantly over the past few years, from nine participants in fall 2011 to a total of 25 students participating in fall 2014. The Center for Academic and Student Achievement, Student Disability Services and Athletics refer students identified as highly at risk for academic failure. Graduate students provide time management and study skills coaching on a weekly basis. The mean fall 2011 cumulative GPA for participants was 2.64, while the average GPA in fall 2014 was 2.76.

Peer-Led Team Learning

In 2012, we added the Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL) program. PLTL is a national program developed at the City College of New York (<https://sites.google.com/site/quickpltl/>) that provides students enrolled in PLTL courses, typically STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) courses, an opportunity to work through supplemental problems outside of class on a weekly basis. We piloted this program with the support and leadership of Dr. Larry Margerum, Chemistry Department faculty, who approached us with a desire to bring more meaningful support to students enrolled in General Chemistry while at the same time retaining and graduating higher numbers chemistry majors. Groups of 6-10 students meet weekly with a peer leader to engage in “workshops” and problem solve questions and topics aligned with topics they are learning in the classroom. Both leaders and students earn one credit for their participation in

the program. In the fall of 2014, we continued to offer six workshop sections for students enrolled in General Chemistry I, and began piloting two workshop sections for students enrolled in Organic Chemistry I. There are currently eight small groups (six General Chemistry and two Organic Chemistry) of 6-10 students who meet with a peer leader each week to discuss assigned problem sets.

International Student Support

In Fall 2013, in response to a large increase in our international student population, the Learning Center added an Academic English Support (AES) peer tutor for both undergraduate and graduate international students. This tutor supports international students in general study strategies (note taking, test taking, time management, public speaking, stress management, financial management), and how to engage in class discussions as well as how to work in peer groups. The AES tutor helps international students learn about the American classroom culture, addressing such topics as how to communicate with professors, the importance of attending office hours, and how to send emails to professors. In the 2013-2014 school year, the AES tutor had 24 contact hours. In fall 2014, the Learning Center decided to increase publicity for this service to yield a higher number of contact hours by visiting classrooms, advertising in the school newsletter and promoting the service at International Student Orientation. In the fall 2014 semester, the AES tutor had 44 contact hours.

In Fall 2014, the Learning Center began offering a weekly drop-in session for international students to come and speak English with the Assistant Director and AES tutor on any topic of their choosing. At the end of fall 2014, the English Speaking Buddies for International Students group had six students attend for a total of 13 contact hours.

Venue improvements

Finally, for the first time since its opening 20 years ago, some significant aesthetic improvements were made to the Learning Center, including carpeting replacement, new paint, new, used furniture and a new space configuration within the Center.

2. What is the relationship of the administrative/service Unit to academic programs and other administrative units within the University (e.g., interdisciplinary programs, research centers, etc.)?

Learning Center staff work to create positive and equitable relationships with colleagues across the university. We accomplish this by working with staff and faculty in academic departments to determine and meet student needs. We rely on faculty to help us recruit and train qualified student tutors and program leaders. The involvement of academic program faculty in this process is critical to maintaining the Center's credibility and enhancing the experience of both tutors and tutees. Further developing this academic department-Learning Center connection is an on-going priority of the Learning Center

The Learning Center became part of the Center of Academic and Student Achievement (CASA) in 2012. This administrative change has helped increase the Center's visibility now that CASA is central to the University's student support structure. Every undergraduate on the main campus now has an Academic Success Coach in CASA who connects them with campus resources such as the Learning Center. Learning Center staff also regularly collaborate with colleagues in other Student Life Departments, particularly those in SHaRE (Student Housing and Residential Education), Career Services Center (CSC), Student Disability Services (SDS) and The Cultural Centers, on publicity events, workshops and trainings, and other events and projects.

3. Does the Unit form partnerships with other Units within the university? (e.g., academic or non-academic)? If so, how is the work coordinated within and across the various units?

The Learning Center partners with many other USF administrative units. As described, the Peer Tutoring Program, Supplemental Instruction and Peer-Led Team Learning all involve collaboration with academic departments in all three colleges. CASA and SDS staff work with the Learning Center to recruit students for and assess nearly all learning center programs. The America Reads and FYIT programs involve collaboration with University Ministry, One Stop, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), the Intercultural Centers and the McCarthy Center. Project Success is the collaboration of the Learning Center, Student Athletics, SDS, and CASA, and works closely with CAPS and Reference Librarians. Coordinating the Learning Center Front desk involves Human Resources, SHARE, and the Rhetoric and Language Department (the administrative home for the Writing Center which shares space with the Learning Center).

Recently, Learning Center began collaborating with University Ministry because they offer a community tutoring program similar to the Learning Center's America Reads and Families & Youth in Transition programs. We now collaborate on trainings and to create more awareness about these different tutoring programs on campus and how they are serving the SF community. The first joint training was held in spring 2014, with the goal of planning at least 1-2 joint meetings per semester. In addition, the CAPS has facilitated trainings with LC tutors on how to work with the various populations they see in their positions. SHaRE has also come in to give customer service trainings to our front desk staff at the start of every school year. The LC is also in the process of applying for grants through the EngageSF initiative that is hosted by the McCarthy Center. Finally, the LC has also contacted various staff/faculty from the School of

Education and other units across the university to give talks to the America Reads & Families & Youth in Transition tutors.

4. What were the main recommendations of the previous program review? How did the Unit and institutional administration respond to the earlier findings and recommendations? What changed after the last program review?

In 2004, the Learning Center was reviewed as part of a self-study conducted by the department of Academic Support Services-- then part of the Academic and Enrollment Services division. The report provided assessment data for the Learning Center's programs but did not include an external review. The staff worked to accomplish the objectives outlined in the report, but later encountered bigger challenges, particularly the expansion of the student population and the complete reorganization of the unit.

In 2011, Academic Support Services and the Learning Center became part of the Center for Student Academic Achievement (CASA) within the Student Life division. The Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator were promoted to Director and Assistant Director last year. They continue to report to the former Director of Academic Support Services, now Assistant Dean for Academic Development for CASA.

5. If this is the first program review, discuss the origins of the Unit. Why was the Unit created?

The Learning Center was created in 1994 as an effort to integrate, professionalize, and expand various tutoring services offered haphazardly through academic departments. The opening of the new Center coincided with the University's efforts to increase diversity and enroll more first generation students.

a. GLEESON LIBRARY**1. What is the relationship of the administrative/service Unit with the Gleeson library? If so, how is the work coordinated within and across the units?**

The Learning Center relies heavily on the Gleeson Library to support our tutors, students, and professional staff. We also collaborate with the library and use space in the library for many on-going workshops and trainings. Each semester we bring groups to the library for a brief orientation of the library and research databases. We also offer research workshops in the library. We count on the library to refer students to the Learning Center as appropriate and in turn we encourage our students to use the space and resources of the library. Finally our tutors utilize the library for their tutoring sessions because of our space limitations. This collaboration is essential to Learning Center operations.

2. How do the services offered by the Gleeson Library support the Unit's goals and objectives?

The current space in Cowell Hall is consistently overloaded with students engaged in tutoring throughout most of the semester. Both students and tutors have voiced concerns (via the evaluation process) that the Learning Center is often a loud and distracting space to work. Tutors and students work elbow to elbow with others while trying to drown out the loud buzz of chatter. Gleeson library is able to provide the space needed for both one-on-one and small group tutoring activities. The Learning Center staff did re-configure the tables in the Center in March of 2013, moving the graduate students to one corner, giving them a designated area to talk with students and complete their

work without distraction. Students are now in the main area of the Center but there is still very limited space where students are able to sit. Currently, there are only 16 available chairs for students to study comfortably at our tables (not including the conference room, which is often reserved for trainings, meetings, and classes).

Gleeson Library also provides resources such as texts, videos, computer programs and access to online sites and documents which are critical to the learning processes taking place in the tutoring sessions. The availability of textbooks is especially important as the Learning Center is unable to maintain an up-to-date library of course texts due to limited finances and space. Tutors and students know that they can meet in the library and find resources necessary to do their work.

b. UNIVERSITY MINISTRY

1. What is the relationship of the administrative/service Unit with the University Ministry? If so, how is the work coordinated within and across the units?

Learning Center programs Families & Youth in Transition and America Reads hold joint trainings each semester with University Ministry's outreach tutors and coordinator. The Learning Center also works with University Ministry staff on the Student Success Workshop Committee, a group of staff members from various Student Life units who design and facilitate a comprehensive workshop program that addresses the multiple needs of the USF student.

2. How do the services offered by the University Ministry support the Unit's goals and objectives?

University Ministry sponsors a tutoring program similar to Families & Youth in Transition and America Reads that sends USF students into Mission District schools to provide tutoring support to students in grades K-12. These programs are closely aligned in that they seek to support students from similar circumstances and/or backgrounds. These programs also share similar goals, the main one being to provide students the opportunity to increase their academic skills and abilities by cultivating effective learning strategies. Both programs build students' confidence, sense of belonging in a school setting, and the necessary skills to overcome academic challenges.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE/SERVICE UNIT GOALS

1. List the goals that will allow the Unit to fulfill its mission. Please provide a curriculum map aligning the University Mission, Unit goals, and the services provided.

The Goals of the Learning Center are to:

- Goal 1. assist students in reaching their learning potential
- Goal 2. promote awareness of University expectations and opportunities
- Goal 3. nurture the development of students' confidence as learners
- Goal 4. encourage students to take ownership for their educational experiences
- Goal 5. support learning needs of students at all skill levels and with all learning styles
- Goal 6. provide opportunities for student learning and application of various success strategies

Adapted from the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) in Higher Education

Through our programs, the Learning Center supports the University’s Mission by facilitating opportunities to gain “*the knowledge and skills needed to succeed as persons and professionals, and the values and sensitivity necessary to be men and women for others*”.

Learning Center Curriculum Map

	Peer Tutoring	Supplemental Instruction	Peer-Led Team Learning	Project Success	America Reads	FYIT	Academic Coaching
USF Mission:	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Learning Center Goals:							
Enhance student learning potential	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Serve as resource	x	x	x	x			x
Develop student confidence	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Help students understand their roles and responsibilities in the learning process.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Support a range of learning styles	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Development and application of new skills and strategies	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

2. For each goal list measurable objectives (it’s not about the number of goals or outcomes but rather about generating evidence that support the Unit fulfill its stipulated mission). That is, what a student should know, do and value as a result of utilizing the services.

As a result of Goal 1: Assist students in reaching their learning potential, *students will demonstrate improved performance in area/course as a result of working with the Learning Center*. As a result of Goal 2: Serve as a resource and guide to University expectations and the culture of higher education, *Learning Center staff will provide relevant knowledge and resources to student clientele*. As a result of Goal 3: Nurture the development of students’ confidence as

learners, *students will express greater confidence in their ability to meet course goals*. As a result of Goal 4: Foster students' sense of ownership for their educational experiences, *students will demonstrate an improved understanding of their role in their own academic success*. Finally, as a result of Goal 5: Support learning needs of students at all skill level and with all learning styles, *tutors will learn and apply strategies that demonstrate an understanding of student learning. Tutors will also incorporate and share various learning and study strategies in their tutoring sessions, and tutees/students will be given opportunities to try various study strategies*

3. How do these goals facilitate the Unit's overarching mission geared toward supporting student learning, development and/or academic success?

The Learning Center's goals are directly tied to the Center's mission of supporting student learning, fostering student development and helping students achieve academic success. We are a student-centered office and aim to provide a welcoming space (physically and mentally) for students to learn strategies on how to be successful academically, to learn the incredible value of teaching one another, to share and collaborate ideas, to foster professional and personal growth as well as to serve as leaders within USF and the greater SF community. Many students report that they not only feel supported at the Learning Center academically but also personally. Our goal is to help students realize their full potential, set SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely) goals, and help them achieve those goals.

IV. QUALITY ASSURANCE

1. What services/products does the Unit provide? Whom do they serve?

The following programs and services are provided through the Learning Center:

Peer-led Course Support

1. *Peer Tutoring*: Peer tutoring provides students to work individually or in small groups with a peer who has passed the course and holds a strong understanding of the material. Sessions last one hour and provide not only content support but also foster the development of successful learning and study strategies. While our main focus is on undergraduate students, all enrolled students are eligible to receive tutoring for the courses they are registered for at USF. Every effort is made to provide tutors for students who request our services. Last year we provided tutoring support for over eighty courses in the College of Arts and Sciences, School of Management, and School of Nursing and Health Professions, serving a total of about 600 students each semester.
2. *Supplemental Instruction*: Originally developed at the University of Missouri-Kansas City in the 1970's, [Supplemental Instruction](#) has long been internationally recognized as a best practice for supporting undergraduate students enrolled in historically challenging courses. USF has been offering Supplemental Instruction to undergraduates on the hilltop campus since the mid 1990's. Trained undergraduate and graduate students called SI leaders attend designated SI classes and offer weekly problem solving and review sessions for current students. The SI program has supported courses in many academic departments including, Nursing, Business, Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, Environmental Sciences, and Physics
3. *Peer-Led Team Learning*: [Peer-Led Team Learning](#) (PLTL) is a nationally recognized model of teaching and learning that originated in a chemistry course at the City College of New York in 1991. In PLTL, high performing students are recruited to be peer-leaders who facilitate small-group learning as an integral part of the course. Each week, the peer-

leaders meet with their group to engage in problem solving and discussion. The program currently serves undergraduate students in General Chemistry I and II, and Organic Chemistry I and II. Participants enroll in a one credit PLTL course.

4. *Off-Campus Tutorial Support:* USF has five regional campuses as well as several on-line degree programs. Peer tutoring and academic skills assistance is provided to students enrolled in these programs through Skype, the USF Canvas website or via telephone.

Community Outreach Programs

5. *America Reads:* America Reads is a nation-wide literacy program that USF has been offering (originally through the School of Education) since the early 1990s. Currently, fifty federal work study-eligible USF students tutor K-3 grade students in five underserved local schools and three after-school programs. The work study students attend both initial and ongoing training sessions, for which they receive academic credit.
6. *Families and Youth in Transition.* The [FYIT](#) program is a partnership between USF and the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) and seeks to eliminate the academic barriers of homeless students. FYIT students serve as tutors in schools and after-school programs throughout San Francisco. FYIT tutors do not need to be work-study eligible.

Academic Skills Development

7. *Project Success:* A collaborative effort between the Learning Center, CASA, Student Disability Service, the Athletics Department, College of Arts & Sciences and School of Management, Project Success aims to help academically at risk students persist and succeed. The program pairs graduate student academic coaches (near peers) with

undergraduate students who have been identified as needing intensive academic support.

The academic coaches help students develop academic skills and strategies to succeed in their courses. Project Success participants must be referred by USF staff.

8. *Academic skills workshops:* The Learning Center collaborates with CASA, CAPS, Career Services and other units to offer the Student Success Workshop Series each semester. Learning Center Workshops focus on improving academic skills in the areas of test-taking, time management, note-taking, quiz and exam preparation, and reading comprehension. Workshops are open to all students.
9. *Individualized skills coaching:* All USF students are eligible to meet with the Learning Center Director and Assistant Director to develop and improve study skills.
10. *Academic Skills development for English Learners:* A graduate student from the Teaching English as a Second Language program in the School of Education offers assistance to students learning English while making the transition to the American classroom. The AES tutor helps with time management, note taking and other study skills as well as issues unique to international students such as how to communicate with professors, attendance and classroom participation expectations etc.
11. *English Speaking Buddies program:* The Learning Center provides weekly opportunities for students to practice English speaking skills with native speaking peers in an informal setting. Open to all students seeking to develop English language skills. See Appendix for [Program Position Descriptions](#).

Learning Resources

- Study/Tutoring Space
- Conference room meeting space
- Computers
- Standardized test preparation materials
- Textbooks
- Rosetta Stone Language building software (Spanish, French)

2. How does the Unit learn about the needs of those served and obtain feedback regarding service delivery?

Each program is somewhat unique in how we obtain feedback but we use both paper and online forms (Survey Monkey, Google Forms) to collect data for all programs. Copies of all forms are available in the [Appendix](#) organized by program. In assessing the need for certain services, we also consider student grades as well as informal assessments provided by our colleagues at CASA, SHaRE, Student Disability Services, CAPS, and course instructors who understand the needs of their students through frequent interaction and evaluation of their work.

3. How does the Unit know it is meeting the stakeholder's needs?

The University regularly surveys students through the Student Satisfaction Inventory. This inventory provides students an opportunity to share thoughts on their experience at USF. The 2014 inventory surveyed 1,307 students. When asked to rate the availability of tutoring services on campus (Q32 of SSI), on a scale of 1(not at all satisfied) to 7 (very satisfied), the mean response was a 5.44. Similarly, when asked if “[a]cademic support services adequately

[met] the needs of students” (Q44 of SSI) the mean response was a 5.52. These findings indicate a high level of student satisfaction and visibility on campus.

The Center also takes measures to collect stakeholder input. In the peer to peer support programs, Peer Tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, and Peer-Led Team Learning, tutors/leaders and students submit evaluations each semester of their experience. All tutors/leaders are observed each semester when working with students, and discuss these observations as well as their own perceptions of their performance with their supervisor. These meetings provide great individual coaching opportunities and are also used to gain feedback on the Center and get suggestions for improvement. SI Leaders and PLT Leaders also complete anonymous evaluations of the program during the middle or end of the semester. Tutors will get their first opportunity to provide anonymous feedback at the end of the spring 2015 semester. Thus far, the observations and individual meetings have been invaluable in determining the needs of the staff and their level comfort in their position. See Appendix for [Assessment Documents](#).

In the Peer Tutoring Program tutors learn about student/tutee needs through the completion of the First Appointment Form (FAF). This pre-tutoring assessment during the first appointment with a tutor provides information on each students’ needs, goals, and current study habits. At the end of the semester, students complete an online evaluation through Survey Monkey. This survey mirrors that of the FAF and gives us a sense of student development over the semester. We would like to see higher return rates on the end of semester evaluation, but typically 1/5 of tutees complete the online form, which is quite high for an online survey. See Appendix for [Tutoring Assessment Forms](#).

SI participants complete both mid-semester and end-of-semester evaluations. At mid-semester students provide feedback on what is going well and what they would like to see

changed in the delivery of the SI sessions. At the end of the semester both participants and non-participants complete surveys. Participants answer questions on skill development and effectiveness of the leader and the program. Non-participants discuss thoughts on their performance without the use of SI. All surveys are completed in-class to achieve maximum return levels. PLTL students complete an evaluation mid-semester only, and we plan to make this twice a semester (middle and end) during spring 2015. We also conduct assessments using students grades to determine the impact and effectiveness of the Learning Center programs. All feedback is useful in helping us set goals and take action. See Appendix for [SI Assessment](#) and [PLTL Assessment](#) forms.

The tutor outreach programs, Families & Youth in Transition and America Reads, use multiple evaluations throughout the semester. Each USF tutor completes at least one or two one-on-one check-ins with their supervisor. These discussions are an opportunity for tutors to express any concerns or challenges they may be facing, as well as share successes and best practices. The graduate assistants who coordinate each program will re-visit the tutors' goals from previous semesters to ensure they are on target and maintaining personal and/or professional growth within their role. The tutors also have multiple opportunities to come together as a group to share experiences and learn from each other.

At the end of each semester, the tutors complete a written evaluation that is submitted to the graduate assistant. These evaluations are read and any feedback is documented and discussed with the Assistant Director. All of the site coordinators submit a written evaluation about each of their tutors, which is also reviewed by the graduate assistants. Any feedback regarding the tutors is shared and discussed. The America Reads first and second semester tutors complete a written evaluation about their instructors and those who have been with America Reads for three

semesters (the II+ class) or longer complete a survey. See Appendix for [America Reads Assessment](#) documents.

Throughout the semester, the graduate assistants and Assistant Director also conduct site visits to most of the sites in each program. The Families & Youth in Transition program works with more than 30 schools within San Francisco Unified School District, so often times it is not possible to visit each site for this program in one semester. The America Reads program currently (as of fall 2014) has five elementary school sites and two after-school sites. In spring 2015, the program will be adding one more after-school site for a total of eight sites.

The Families & Youth in Transition program graduate assistant and Assistant Director also meet at least once per semester with the FYIT liaison from SFUSD. During those meetings, strengths and growth areas are discussed in an effort to improve the program's processes. At the end of the 2014-2015 school year, SFUSD will review its FYIT partnership with USF to ensure that USF tutors are effectively making an impact on students' academic success. See Appendix for [FYIT Assessment](#) documents.

For the Project Success program, stakeholders needs are assessed through an online evaluation form sent at the end of each semester. Using a Likert scale, each student is asked to rate the degree to which their coach met the goals and outcomes established by the program (see appendix for student evaluation). The coaches also complete an evaluation form at the end of each semester that evaluates training effectiveness and provides supervisor feedback, (see appendix for coach evaluation). Finally, at the end of each semester, the Assistant Director meets with CASA staff to ensure that Athletics is satisfied with the student-athletes' progress in the program. See Appendix for [Project Success Assessment](#) documents.

4. What are the Unit's planning, decision-making, and evaluation processes?

The Director and Assistant Director work with the student leadership staff of each program to set goals, make decisions, and evaluate services. The staff leaders meet weekly as a group and once or twice a week individually with their direct supervisor to discuss current issues and plan for the current semesters assessment needs and plans.

5. How do stakeholders learn about and access the services/products provided by the Unit?

The Learning Center relies heavily on its campus partners to share information about the Learning Center with students and colleagues. We receive many referrals from CASA, SDS, SHaRE, CAPS, and various academic departments. At the start of each semester we initiate a poster campaign posting new Learning Center signage in residence halls, campus resource offices and on bulletin boards in academic building. Our programs are advertised on the USF Calendar and the Phoenix, an online campus newsletter for students. In the fall, we host an Open House in Gleeson Plaza (as opposed to in the Center) for maximum exposure. In the past we have even held competitions to attract new students. When student centered events such as DonsFest and the Involvement Fair are held on campus, we take advantage of the opportunity to host a table and answer questions about the Learning Center. We are also "tabling" once a month in the University Center cafeteria during peak dining times.

Our [website](#) is a great place for students, faculty, and staff to gather information about the Center. We have even created several FAQ pages on the site to ensure that we're being as transparent as possible. The Learning Center also connects with students, faculty, and staff through, our social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). Faculty and staff also learn about our services through direct contact from our office. Typically we ask them to collaborate on a program such as Supplemental Instruction, or we attend faculty meetings and orientation

events to introduce or review our services. Students can take advantage of our services by coming into the Center, calling, or logging into [TutorTrac](#), the appointment scheduling software for the Peer Tutoring Program.

6. How does the Administrative/Services Units compare with peer institutions in terms of structure, responsibilities, size and budget? Specify the criteria by which these institutions were selected for comparison.

The Learning Center shares both similarities and differences with institutions in the Bay Area, specifically learning centers at UC Berkeley in Berkeley, SF State University in San Francisco, Santa Clara University in Santa Clara, and Saint Mary's University in Moraga. Santa Clara University, a Jesuit Institution only a 40 minute drive from San Francisco, shares the most in common with the University of San Francisco, including the size of its population and diversity. Like SCU's Drahmman Learning Resources and Academic Advising Center, the USF Center provides individual and small group tutoring appointments. Drop-in tutoring is no longer offered at USF due to consistent under-utilization. Unlike at some other centers, The Learning Center supports students at all levels of academic study resulting in the Center's support of over 80 courses each semester. Besides peer tutoring, however, the USF Learning Center offers several other types of peer support programs that the Santa Clara and St. Mary's centers do not, including Supplemental Instruction, Peer-Led Team Learning, and Project Success. The Learning Center is also unique in that it supports two tutoring outreach programs, America Reads and Families and Youth in Transition. Programs like these are typically housed in the School of Education at other institutions. Like at many other institutions, the Learning Center professional staff provide academic skills support on an individual basis and through the facilitation of student success workshops and college success courses.

Size of the professional staff at the Learning Center is on par with that of other smaller religious institutions on this list, however the USF Learning Center does not have an administrative assistant to share in the administrative tasks, which imposes a burden on our professional staff. As mentioned previously the Learning Center coordinates eight unique tutoring programs while peer institutions coordinate roughly two to three programs and share their tutoring responsibilities with several of the academic departments. The larger, public institutions, SFSU and UC Berkeley support multiple programs and also have multiple centers and large professional staff to support their programs.

The multi-use space at the USF Learning Center is cramped. Here, tutors meet with tutees and office staff to carry on their daily business, meetings, interviews, and outreach projects. The Learning Center is also often called upon to share our space with other departments to hold classes and meetings, and proctor exams. To relieve some of the burden tutors are given leave to work in alternate spaces on campus, such as the Library, University Center, empty classrooms, etc. We work with Events Management and the Registrar's Office to schedule classroom space for tutor trainings and for SI and PLTL to hold their weekly sessions. Lack of available space on campus to hold these sessions restricts our ability to hold sessions at more optimal times for student learning.

In contrast, UC Berkeley has a large open center with two floors of space for students to study and meet with tutors, as well as several smaller rooms for the athletic tutoring program. SFSU has an entire floor dedicated to their multiple tutoring programs, and both Santa Clara and St. Mary's have both moved into large student center spaces in recent years. We are excited to continue to grow and support USF's expanding student population, but to do so effectively we need increased professional staff, a larger budget, and more space.

V. BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

1. Provide a budget allocation and expenditure summary for the past three fiscal years.

Year	Operations	Operations	Student Employment	Student Employment
	Budget	Spent	Budget	Spent
2013-2014	49871	14,207.50	109995	152658.5
2012-2013	31614.25	18680.8	108050	158572
2011-2012	23392.66	16462.4	94,436.00	103,342.58
Total	104877.91	49,350.70	312481	414573.08

Total Budget (2012-2014) 417358.91

Total Spent (2012-2014) 463,923.78

Differences -46,564.87

The totals provided under the Student Employment Budget apply only to Peer Tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, Peer-Led Team Learning and Project Success. Funds for America Reads, Families and Youth in Transition, and Foreign Language Tutoring come from alternative sources.

2. To what extent does the allocation of resources allow the Administrative/Service Unit to meet its goals and objectives? Is there a close alignment between the costs of running the Unit and budgeted resources?

Despite our best efforts, each fiscal year the Learning Center struggles and ultimately fails to stay within budget. Over the past few years we have made many cuts and adjustments to reduce spending. After years of having weekend hours the center is now only open Monday through Friday. We have also limited the total number of hours students can work with tutors each week, hired tutors who can tutor multiple subjects instead of just one, cut the drop-in tutoring program, and increased the number of group tutoring appointments. Despite a few budget increases in the last five years, the expanding student population, increase in staff hourly wages, and student and faculty demand have made it challenging to keep costs under budget.

3. What changes could be made to produce greater efficiencies or economics of scale (e.g., reduction, modification, elimination of paperwork, reorganization)? What constraints must the Unit address to achieve these?

As mentioned previously several modifications have been made over the last few years to counter the increasing costs of operating the Learning Center. We could continue to cut or limit our services but this is not a welcome idea for any of our stakeholders. A new full-time office assistant position to replace a rotation of student workers would help the learning center use resources more efficiently. The Learning Center needs a staff member to serve at the front desk in order to provide a more professional image and help streamline daily operations. The office assistant position would also allow the Director and Assistant Director to use their time more efficiently and reduce the number of student staff. Currently we assign multiple students to work at the desk at the same time in order to allow for training, tardiness, absences or breaks and to accommodate sudden "surges" of students, faculty and staff at the desk. We have requested

university funds to support a new administrative staff position. We have also begun approaching academic departments to ask that they contribute financially to the Center, especially those whose students success rely heavily on the continuation of certain services and programs.

4. What improvements are possible through reallocating existing resources?

By shifting responsibility of some Learning Center programs to other departments, we could make improvements on those programs under our control. This is likely impossible as we are constantly approached by academic and student services departments to initiate more programs or activities for their students.

5. What improvements can only be addressed through additional resources?

The addition of a new staff member would greatly increase the ability of Learning Center professional staff to ensure that quality services are being provided, consistently evaluated and improvements implemented. Currently the Director and Assistant Director are engaged more heavily in administrative activities than in the development and efficiencies of the Center's key programs. An increase in funds would also allow the Center to offer a competitive wage to its student staff. Too often we have students turn down a position with the Learning Center because they feel they can make significantly more money elsewhere. An increase in funds would allow for the expansion of key programs, providing an opportunity to meet the needs of the University's ever growing and diversifying student population. We could also work more closely with our faculty partners to develop programs more in line with the needs of their students.

Finally, the expansion of the Center's physical space and resources (books, computers, computer software) would provide a tremendous opportunity for USF to offer students a Learning Center more in line with the universities flagship programs.

VI. ASSESSMENT: IMPACT ON STUDENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT, AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Provide a summary of how critical administrative processes and/or the services are assessed or evaluated in the Unit, and the results of those evaluations.

Student Performance

Student performance is measured by examining course grades and GPAs earned at the end of each semester. Students are also asked to provide feedback on their performance and development as a result of their exposure to a Learning Center program. In some cases, specifically with our outreach programs, instructors also comment on the student development they've observed.

Student Staff Performance/ Service Delivery

Tutors, leaders, and other student staff are to provide feedback on their own performance through a standard evaluation form. Here the staff member can share thoughts on their areas of strength and areas of growth. Stakeholders such as students and instructors also comment on the performance of staff members based off their personal experience with the individuals or groups. Finally, the staff members' direct supervisor evaluates the individual at least once a year.

Staff Training

At the end of each training, or at the end of the semester, the staff is asked to provide feedback about their professional development experiences. They are asked to comment on what was beneficial/relevant to their work, and what they found least beneficial/relevant. They are also asked to comment on topics and activities they would like to see in the future.

Leadership/Resources/Communication

Staff are also asked to comment on the Center's leadership style, mode of communication, and the resources they have access to when at work.

Evaluation Documents and Results

All [Evaluation Documents](#) and Spring 2014 [Assessment Results](#) can be found in the Appendix.

2. List the number of students using the services provided during the most recent academic year, and the Unit's role in tracking their success upon completion of the service.

In the fall of 2013, 494 unique students participated in the Peer Tutoring program. This number grew to 580 students in the spring of 2014. In the fall of 2013, 384 students (49% of enrolled students) participated in the Supplemental Instruction Program. In the spring 2014 semester 278 students (46% of enrolled students) participated in the program. In fall 2013, 58 students (28% of students enrolled in General Chemistry I) participated in the Peer-Led Team Learning Program. In the spring 2014, 34 students (17% of General Chemistry II students) participated in the program.

Project Success had 28 students in Fall of 2013 and 23 in spring 2014, the number decreased to 23 students. When participating students continue for more than a semester the previous semester's GPA and cumulative GPA are tracked and compared. This GPA is an average of all the students participating in the program for that semester or year. We have not yet conducted a comparison of students who are in Project Success with students who are not in Project Success because of the extreme differences between these groups.

The Learning Center tracks student staff members GPA by semester. America Reads and FYIT tutors must maintain a GPA above a 2.5 and Peer Tutors, SI Leaders and PLTL Leaders must maintain a GPA above a 3.0 or risk suspension from their position. This is to ensure that tutors prioritize their own academic success. Tutors are role models to their students, they must be able to handle academic pressures in order to demonstrate to their students how to do the same.

At this point the Learning Center has not made tracking students' performance year to a year as an evaluative activity. We will begin to work with the Center for Institutional Planning and Effectiveness in the coming year to track student GPA's year to year as well as their graduation rates. We may also try some matched sample studies to assess the effectiveness of various programs.

3. To what degree have you achieved Unit goals and outcomes?

a. Describe how data gleaned from meaningful assessments have helped the Unit improve critical processes, Unit key functions, stakeholder needs, delivery of services and identification of best practices (continuous improvement).

Tutoring, S.I., and PLTL Training Improvements

Evaluations submitted by the staff of the Peer Tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, and Peer-Led Team Learning programs have ultimately helped us shape our tutor training. Tutors can share their concerns through training evaluations and the self-evaluation process. Due to tutor/leader feedback we have placed more emphasis communication, assertiveness and setting boundaries between tutor and tutee. The administration has adjusted how they communicate with their staff via email and developed more appropriate protocols for the front desk staff when connecting tutor and tutee for their sessions. Student feedback has also informed how the Center shapes tutor trainings and front desk protocols. See Appendix for Assessment Results for the [Peer Tutoring Program](#), [PLTL Program](#), and [SI Program](#).

Front Desk Staff Training Improvements

Based on surveys completed by students who use our services, the front desk staff has undergone a significant amount of customer service training hours to improve the level of service that is provided to Learning & Writing Center guests. In the past five years, the Center has gone from providing no formal customer training to one initial training in fall 2012 and now to one per semester. To improve effectiveness, we collaborated with USF Human Resources for the most recent training. We intend to continue with these two formal customer service trainings each year. See Appendix for Assessment Results on the [Front Desk Staff](#).

America Reads and FYIT Program Improvements

Based on the surveys from the site coordinators with America Reads from spring 2014 and fall 2014, along with the addition of the administrative assistant in spring 2015, the graduate assistant will be doing more site visits to ensure that the tutors feel fully supported on-site, that communication is clear with the teachers/site coordinators and to closely observe tutors as they are working. The goals of these increased site visits is to improve tutors' overall work performance and experience with the America Reads program, increase tutee academic performance, and foster a love for reading within each tutee as well as to ensure site coordinator/teacher satisfaction with the program overall. This spring we've also required tutors to check-in with each teacher at the beginning of the semester to create a structured goal/plan for each tutee, to set goals with the tutees, and to use formal documents that will track the progress of the students during the sessions. See Appendix for [Assessment Documents](#) and [Assessment Results](#).

In the fall 2014 semester, the LC Assistant Director noted that the effectiveness of the USF tutors' work is not measured (i.e. the students themselves are not assessed before and after working with USF tutors), so it is difficult to know if the work is making a measurable impact academically or emotionally for students. To address this need, a more structured plan will be laid out for each tutor to track tutee progress in the fall 2015 semester. At the end of the 2014-2015 school year, as a result of restructuring the end of semester evaluation for America Reads tutors and the classroom teachers they are assisting, there will be a quantifiable measure of program satisfaction that will be used to implement changes moving forward.

In fall 2014, many teachers that America Reads tutors were assigned to reported that they weren't able to take initiative and that students needed explicit directions; thus, it would be

helpful to provide tutors with greater resources, opportunities to practice, and individualized feedback so as to build their confidence working in classrooms. The topic of assertiveness will be addressed in a training session in spring 2015 and will be integrated into the training curriculum to be covered at least twice per year (once per semester).

Based on feedback from key stakeholders of the FYIT there have been several improvements since its inception.

- A new orientation document that is sent to the tutor, site coordinator and SFUSD liaison that outlines the tutor's hours ([See Appendix](#))
- increased trainings/guest speakers from USF and outside USF
- centralization information of newly established wiki site
- increase in tutor numbers
- greater publicity (ex. USF Magazine article)
- joint training with University Ministries
- increased professional and personal opportunities on campus for graduate assistants
- use of a revised activity log beginning spring 2015. See Appendix on [America Reads Assessment Documents](#).

In addition to these changes for the America Reads and Families & Youth in Transition programs, we've also added some combined trainings for both tutor populations to attend, utilizing USF campus resources. Due to feedback on evaluations requesting more training on how to cope with vicarious trauma and how to work with the specific tutee populations, beginning in fall 2012, we invited Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPs) staff to come and do a talk on these subjects. They now do one formal training every fall semester. Beginning

in fall 2013, we've asked an officer from Public Safety to come and speak about working and commuting in the city of San Francisco as well as the safety concerns/precautions to take while navigating through the city. This training was implemented after an incident occurred with one of our tutors during her bus commute in spring 2013. See Appendix for [Training Outlines](#).

b. Describe how data collected are used to inform and support other Academic and Non-Academic Units in the Institution.

All of our peer-tutoring programs provide additional support to faculty goals for their students. Current assessment information gives the Learning Center programs direction when it comes to selecting the courses we support. Tutor Request Forms during the semester and course usage reports at the end of the semester indicate which courses are in high demand by students. We also use undergraduate course grades to identify classes possibly in need of additional support. The Supplemental Instruction Program focuses on courses with high DFW rates, and the SI graduate assistant uses course records to identify which instructors to approach regarding a partnership with the SI Program. In both Supplemental Instruction and Peer-Led Team Learning, we share assessment findings with participating faculty who may use information as they wish. See Appendix for [Assessment Documents](#) and [Assessment Results](#).

c. Describe how staff/administrator in the Unit analyzes trends of Unit productivity (e.g., students serviced, tracking student success in academic programs, etc.)

Each semester the Learning Center tracks student participation for the Peer Tutoring Program, PLTL Program and the SI Program. We look for increases in the number of unique students because this tells us that we have more students aware of our services. We also look for multiple contact hours for each unique student which demonstrates that the students found our

services valuable enough to return for more support. When the number of unique students and contact hours are low in comparison to previous years, tutors are reminded to schedule follow-up appointments with their tutees at the end of each appointment. Tutors and SI Leaders are asked to send out reminders to their classes about their availability. Over the last three years student participation in the Peer Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction Programs has remained constant or has increased slightly to account for the higher number of USF students. In SI the number of students and contact hours change based on the number of faculty partners we've recruited for the current semester. PLTL is somewhat different as students must register for the course unit at the beginning of the semester and therefore cannot be added in midway through the semester. Leader performance is evaluated to ensure that students are comfortable in their sections and will therefore remain enrolled in the PLTL course. Student exam grades are evaluated and tend to reflect on the dynamic of the group. We hold competitions for groups to encourage peer support and greater involvement of individuals within each group.

Grades from each student participating in Project Success are gathered at the end of each semester. An average GPA and average cumulative GPA are taken at the end of each semester and compared to the previous semester. Because there is no formal tracking done to follow each student as they participate in or move on from the program, it is difficult to state specific academic success about each student as they progress through their time at USF. However, on average, the GPAs (semester and cumulative) generally average about 2.7, with some semesters the average being a little higher and some semesters a little lower. A large majority of the students referred are either on academic probation already or are in danger of entering this category. Therefore, the GPAs of students who are in the program show that the Project Success program is helpful to most participants.

In regards to tracking productivity with the America Reads and Families & Youth in Transition programs, please see response to Question 3a of this section.

d. Describe changes made to the Administrative/Services Unit using evaluation/assessment data.

In the past five years, changes have been made to the following programs:

The Learning & Writing Center has been using TutorTrac to schedule and track appointments and provide more accurate feedback on service usage. TutorTrac has allowed us to track the number of students utilizing some tutoring programs and the number of hours worked per subject and per tutor. Previously all appointments were scheduled by connecting tutee with tutor, sharing the tutors contact information and hoping that the two connected. At the end of each pay period tutors would turn in tracking forms that indicated who they met with, for what, when, and how long. All of that information was then entered into a database by the front desk staff. TutorTrac has helped to free up time for the front desk staff, improve accuracy of tutoring information, and shorten the wait time before a tutor and tutee could connect.

Previously, students could schedule an appointment for any length of time, at any given time. Many tutors reported that this was stressful as students could spend hours trying to cram in information from a whole semester the night before an exam and the tutors felt burnt out, but uncomfortable telling the tutee that they wanted to leave. TutorTrac has allowed us to limit appointments to one hour per subject per tutor. In order to provide service to more students without increasing the amount of availability, we have been able to limit students to three hours of appointments for any given subject in a seven day period. We were also able to limit students to appointments for classes in which they were currently registered. This has improved the

accuracy of our numbers, increased the number of students able to access tutoring services, and reduced the number of students able to abuse the services.

In order to align our peer tutor trainings with the requirements of the CRLA, we drastically changed our tutoring curriculum and delivery methods. By providing and requiring that tutors attend more tutor trainings we have been able to ensure that all tutors reach at least the first level of CRLA certification before leaving the program. We were also better able to provide tutors with the kinds of practice and resources they requested through their self and training evaluations. This included opportunities to observe more established tutors in the program and to meet at least once a semester with the director of the Learning Center for individual coaching. Finally, we were better able to prepare tutors to meet the changing needs of their tutees as well as the goals of the Learning Center. After developing a more comprehensive tutor training program we were able to use that same framework and resources to develop trainings for the SI Program and the new PLTL Program. See Appendix for [Training Syllabi and Outlines](#).

We have begun hiring peer tutors who are eligible to tutor multiple subjects even if we do not have requests for many of those courses. This is to reduce the number of tutor requests we have to fulfill by making the resource readily available when it's needed. We have also added to our physical resources within the Center as much as possible by purchasing more up to date course texts, adding computer programs such as Rosetta Stone and NCLEX/HESI preparation for the Nursing students.

The America Reads training program no longer has online classes that divide tutors into separate class sections once they've been in the program for three semesters or more (IIA, IIB, IIIA, IIIB, IVA and IVB). Beginning in fall 2011, the cohort was combined into one II+ course. Instead of receiving one credit for the class, tutors are now paid to attend the trainings. We also

reduced the America Reads II+ cohort trainings to once per month in-person meetings, where tutors can share ideas and best practices. See Appendix for [Training Outlines](#).

The graduate assistant now holds site lead meetings once per semester, so the lead tutors at each site have a chance to connect, share concerns as well as leadership strategies. We have started tracking the number of books tutors read to students. There will be more site visits by the AR graduate assistant in spring 2015, with the aim of visiting each site at least twice now that we have hired a student administrative assistant (current undergraduate America Reads site lead) to complete tasks such as approving timesheets and creating schedules. The Assistant Director now holds bi-weekly check-ins with the America Reads graduate assistant, the first is one-one and the second is a joint check-in with the FYIT grad assistant.

Beginning in fall 2013, we started a partnership with Reading Partners, an independent education and reading non-profit housed within select elementary schools in SFUSD. In spring 2015, we added one new after school site - bringing the total partnerships to five elementary schools and three after-school sites in the city of San Francisco. We've incorporated a basic training of the [Fountas & Pinnell assessment](#) into the IA and IB America Reads classes (tutors receive one credit each). The Fountas & Pinnell assessment is used district-wide to assess students' reading and literacy comprehension levels.

We have revised the tutor request form to more accurately reflect pertinent information used in matching tutors with tutees. We have also revised the activity tracking form that tutors must complete at the end of every pay period, which shows the progress of each tutee. The FYIT grad assistant now conducts trainings three weeks per month, with the fourth week dedicated to one-one check-ins with each tutor. Lastly, the Assistant Director now holds bi-weekly check-ins

with the FYIT grad assistant. The first check-in is one-on-one and the second is a joint check-in with the America Reads graduate assistant.

The Project Success coaches now meet once per month in-person for 1 ½ hour trainings. Each coach is also required to check-in with the Assistant Director once per month for an in-person 30 minute meeting to discuss the progress of each of their assigned students. There is now a formal document used for tracking the progress of each student that each coach must complete by the end of every week. A USF wiki has also been created to use as a resource for training topics, best practices and to provide a discussion board for coaches.

Several changes were made in order to improve the quality of service provided by the Learning Center front desk. First, front desk student staff are now asked to set goals at the beginning of each semester. These goals are revisited during the new mid-semester check-ins which are individual one-on-one meetings with the Assistant Director. Next, the 360 evaluation (evaluations completed by the individual, a peer, and a supervisor) is now conducted each semester. The Assistant Director has now implemented a “3 strikes you’re out” policy, which includes one verbal warning and two strikes before the staff member is terminated. Finally, the front desk student staff now participates in two formal customer service trainings per year.

4. What factors have facilitated or impeded the Unit’s ability to meet its goals and outcomes?

Many aspects of USF administration and culture facilitates Learning Center’s ability to achieve its goals. The willingness of administration and faculty to try new programs and the flexible “just try it” attitude supports our efforts.

Some of the aspects of USFs environment that create impediments to our growth involve limitations on resources and, most profoundly, space limitations. Other impediments involve

faculty misperceptions about the role of Learning Center. Some professors do not know of its existence and others think we can provide any kind of support that faculty members believe is needed. Individual faculty members sometimes ask for services we cannot provide with current resources. Inconsistencies among departments in terms of expectations and resources are also a problem. Some tutoring is supported by academic departments, such as Modern and Classical Languages supporting language tutoring, while others use a great deal of the Learning Center's resources but provide no monetary support what so ever. These types of situations can lead to both confusion and a sense of unfairness among faculty which in turn leads to administrative challenges for Center staff.

Finally, Learning Center staff occasionally find themselves in the middle of a Gap between teaching styles or teacher expectations and student learning styles. The number of students who come in for tutoring for the same course often varies greatly by professor. It's hard not to notice that one professor's course has over a dozen tutor requests every semester when another professor's same course has none. At this point the Learning Center staff are not in a position to use this information constructively because we are not confident that faculty members or academic departments would welcome this type of feedback. In some cases faculty refer many of their students to tutoring and believe it relieves them of some level of responsibility for student understanding. In contrast, other professors say that they want students to come to them with questions rather than tutors. Clearly either of these situations can impede Learning Center services.

5. How do faculty/staff roles support the Unit's delivery of services? Gaps?

Faculty roles are intertwined with the Learning Centers core services. Faculty help recruit tutors, assist in training, and refer students for tutoring. They also provide guidance and ideas for

program development, and in some cases such as PLTL, take a central role in facilitating the activities. In general faculty are very supportive of the Learning Center's goals. As described above, however, the relationship between the Learning Center and Faculty members can sometimes be challenging. Issues arise when faculty members have expectations not aligned with our goals or inaccurate perceptions. Distribution of resources and real or perceived inequities among departments can also be a source of tension.

VII. GUIDE FOR THE FUTURE

1. What are the Unit's strengths? What examples of long-term excellence, recent accomplishment, or improvement characterize the Unit's recent history? In what ways could the Unit be considered a leader in its field?

The Learning Center's flexible structure and the abilities of LC staff to accommodate the universities changing needs is one of its key strengths. As USF enrollment has grown dramatically over the last few years, the Learning Center has had to expand programs and develop new ones while stretching resources to address the demands of more students.

As one example, in response to the need for more non-work study student employment opportunities as well as to community needs, we added the FYIT program in 2009, a community program that now offers up to 30 students non-work study paid tutoring positions.

The Center staff members recently added several other new programs to the Learning Center's offerings, providing further proof of the organization's dynamic nature. In response to a faculty member's identification of a new trend in Chemistry teaching, Learning Center staff added the Peer Led Team Learning program for students in highly challenging Chemistry classes. Last year, the staff developed an English Speaking Buddies program to provide a much needed opportunity for International students who need to improve English speaking skills to

practice in an informal setting. This staff initiated the program almost overnight in response to faculty requests and observations.

The Center is also an example of how Learning Centers can be well-aligned with the University Mission and help illuminate the core values for students. The Learning Center offers students opportunities to practice the core values of the university through collaborative learning and tutoring, through work with diverse populations in the community and through the Center's central focus on academic excellence. The Center also serves the university mission by embedding USF in the San Francisco Community through FYIT and America Reads.

The Learning Center is also a model of how co-curricular activities can help students prepare for future careers by developing teaching, customer service, and other essential "soft" skills. We also provide uniquely rich opportunities for our student staff to develop strong leadership and mentoring skills while earning wages. The Center has a highly qualified, engaged student staff who are held to high, well-respected, CRLA standards for training.

2. What are the Unit's weaknesses? Where could the Unit improve most? What challenges or obstacles make it difficult to overcome these weaknesses? What further challenges does the faculty foresee in the coming years?

Space and Location

Limited space creates many challenges for the Learning Center. Currently, there is limited space for tutoring in our Center. We would like to be able to have all tutoring occur at the center instead of other places on campus so that tutors have the resources, support and supervision available at the center. Ideally we would also like to have designated area for

informal collaborative learning activities like study groups and meeting space for certain groups like transfer and commuter students to foster than academic engagement.

Limited space is a pervasive problem that will continue to get worse with time as our student population grows. A larger space would allow us to expand and better meet our goals.

The location of our Center is also a challenge. It is located in the School of Nursing instead of in a central location that is more visible and accessible for all students. The library would be an excellent space to provide this type of accessible presence on campus.

Budget and Faculty Influence

We are also limited by our budget and constrained by faculty expectations. There are often times when we are unable to provide the kind of tutoring support that students need because there isn't enough demand for a certain subject to make hiring a tutor (and training that tutor) economically viable. Because we are eager to have faculty participate in learning center activities having to say no every time they request a service that is not in our budget is difficult. USF Faculty members are used to having their voices heard and, understandably, have a hard time accepting "we don't have the money to help that student" so it puts pressure on us to find the money even when it doesn't make sense economically. A similar issue involves Supplemental Instruction, a program initiated by faculty. We question whether our supplemental instruction program is sustainable, as the number of students served is low relative to the cost of training SI leaders and maintaining the program. Decisions are often made either directly or indirectly by faculty, regardless of resources issues, because of the influence faculty have on academic support policies and services.

Lack of financial resources to pay tutors competitive wages is also a limitation. Because of the extremely high cost of living in San Francisco, we are not able to recruit many of the tutors we would like to hire. Most sophomores, juniors and seniors live off-campus and therefore must pay rent in one of the most expensive housing market in the country. Due to limited funds we are unable to pay tutors much more than the minimum wage of \$11.05 per hour. Pay rates generally begin at \$12.00 per hour. In order to maintain our high standards for tutors, we would like to be able to offer them a wage that will help them pay living expenses while attending USF.

Communication and Publicity

Communication about our services is a challenge. Unfortunately, students do not always check their emails, which force us to find other ways by which to communicate to students about our services. We attend all of the main fairs on campus every semester, hold an Open House every fall semester, advertise in *the Phoenix* newsletter and via posters in the main areas of campus but we still encounter students who have never heard about our Center or are not aware of what we offer. Communication with faculty can also be challenging. A few semesters ago, we held a Faculty Reception in our Center so we could spread awareness about our services to USF faculty. Disappointingly, despite email and hard copy invitations, this reception was poorly attended.

Branch Campuses

Ensuring that all of our branch campuses receive the same support as the Hilltop students is a decades-old challenge. Writing help is most in demand, but we do not have the financial resources to have a full-time writing preceptor at each branch campus. So, students must settle

for an appointment with a consultant that comes a few days a week to that site, or set up a consultation via Skype or over the phone with consultants at the Hilltop. We are able to offer peer tutor support online but sometimes students provide feedback that they would prefer an in-person meeting, which we are unable to do at this time.

International Student Support

We would like to grow our support for international students and generate more attendance for the English Speaking Buddies for International Students (ESBIS) program and Academic English Support (AES) tutor. Currently, we are averaging about 1-2 students in attendance per week for the ESBIS program and this fall semester, we had 44 contact hours with the AES tutor. To publicize these services, we made announcements in classrooms and advertised with flyers around campus and in the Phoenix campus newsletter

3. What changes have occurred in administrative processes and/or services provided over the past five years that have influenced the Unit's view of its role in the University and the field?

As discussed, there have been recent, very significant, administrative changes that directly affected the Learning Center. As a result, the Learning Center is well-positioned now as an extension of CASA, the new unit at the core of the university's student services. The nature and structure of this relationship needs to be further explored. In its third year, CASA is still constantly assessing and changing the way services are provided. As CASA's role becomes more settled and accepted within the university community, we will be able to more critically evaluate the Learning Center/CASA relationship and reporting structure and make adjustments accordingly.

VIII. PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

1. Describe where the staff would like the Unit to go in terms of services, performance standards, collaboration with other units, synergies, etc.

We want to take the Learning Center out of the shadows and make it a more visible and accepted part of the university. There is a need for a larger, communal space in a centralized location with access to learning resources. We would like to revisit the idea of a learning commons in Gleeson Library. Our vision of a USF learning commons is a place where students can come to seek technological service through ITS, research support through the reference librarians, writing support through the Writing Center, subject-based tutoring through the Learning Center, or a place to study with tutors or groups. The article [College Learning Assistance Center Design Considerations](#) lays out guidelines for creating a comprehensive Learning Commons.

Student staff training

Each group of students employees (Front Desk Staff , Peer Tutors, SI Leaders, PLTL Leaders, America Reads Tutors, FYIT Tutors, and Project Success tutors participate in ongoing training and professional development activities during their time with the Learning Center, typically meeting monthly as a group and individually with their supervisor at least once each semester. The topics and activities are constantly changing which allows the delivery of more up to date and pressing topics. It also ensures that returning staff feel that they are constantly learning new skills as opposed to discussing topics they have covered multiple times. In order to maintain consistency within groups of staff we will press forward in creating training syllabi for new employees especially which cover the same topics during each hiring cycle. We will

develop outlines or scripts to follow to ensure that the same information is provided in each training in the same way. We will continue to build on our training manuals, available to all staff, so that everyone has access to the same information. See Appendix for current [Training Outlines](#).

Assessment

Evaluations are completed by both staff, students, and in some cases faculty each semester; unfortunately not all programs have been able to include observation as a form of assessment. These programs are Peer Tutoring, Project Success and FYIT. The fall 2014 semester was the first time we implemented supervisor observations in the America Reads program. Observations have been a challenge thus far because they are extremely time consuming and difficult to coordinate given that tutoring does not take place in one site, appointments are scheduled at a wide range of times and are many times rescheduled at the last minute, and the number of tutors can be massive. Currently we are working on ideas to simplify the process and considering the use of video recording to bring the sessions to us. Observation is necessary to ensure that staff are meeting their program's and the center's goals, and achieving at least the minimum performance standards. Observations also provide the supervisor more background to draw from when meeting with staff in one-on-one meetings. We hope to focus on the development and implementation of this during summer 2015.

Development of programs geared toward underrepresented groups

It is the Learning Center's goal to plan and implement new programming that speaks to the recruitment and persistence of students of color. Currently we do not have a program geared

specifically toward the academic support of students of color and this is another project we plan to research during the Summer 2015.

Collaborations with key departments to allow for specialized support

The Supplemental Instruction Program and the Peer-Led Team Learning Program are successful because they call for direct collaboration with faculty and other departments. It is our goal for the Peer Tutoring program to develop more strategic relationships with faculty to ensure that we are meeting the specific needs of various student groups. Currently we provide appointment-based peer tutoring but we have received requests from instructors to provide drop-in tutoring for specific courses in department labs. We would like to honor this request because students are more likely to attend and get more out of the tutoring sessions when and where they are needed. We would also like to pilot imbedded tutoring, where tutors are placed in the classroom during class time and provide support to students when the learning is taking place. This will provide greater assurance that students will know that tutoring support is available and that they will take advantage of the support.

Technology

Access to learning technologies to improve on both student and staff learning and support. Students are more familiar with online technologies and resources than not. They are tech savvy and expect the world to meet them where they are. Currently the Learning Center is not as advanced in its use of educational technology as we would like it to be, and we are working to change that. We want to make sure we are using technology to best meet the needs of our mostly

tech savvy student population, particularly off-campus and branch campus students who need to access to the Center and its resources virtually.

Technology is playing a larger role in higher education, especially with more universities adding online programs. This shift has facilitated a need for more online support to students unable to physically attend tutoring sessions on campus. Many Learning Centers have begun providing support through platforms such as Blackboard or Desire2Learn. These programs allow tutors and tutees to see and hear one another, share documents and do activities all while from the comfort of their homes. The Learning Center has integrated online support using Canvas, the university's main online learning platform. We still have a way to go before online tutoring is accessible to a larger population and we welcome any advice on how to best implement this service. We have also considered adding online sessions to the Supplemental Instruction program, especially for those connected to nursing courses. This would allow more nursing students the opportunity to attend or later view sessions if they are unable to attend due to hospital shifts and long commutes.

2. Describe where the field going based on the literature, professional association meetings, etc. and how the Unit is ready to address those challenges and improvements.

Student Support Needs

Since the 1970's, Learning Assistance Centers and their professional associations have been on the rise. This is due to the vast increase in diversity of learning styles, academic backgrounds and levels of preparedness among students entering universities. College students enter at all levels of readiness, class sizes continue to increase, and part-time faculty often straddle several colleges. All of these factors add up to a greatly increasing demand for

individualized learning assistance. Learning Assistance Centers therefore are in higher demand, and see an increase in the number of students and faculty seeking their support. We are working to create more strategic relationships with faculty and staff to provide appropriate support to each group of students. We also work with our student staff to develop individual relationships with each of them and take that opportunity to learn about their needs and the needs of their students. We provide the USF student population ample opportunity to get involved and feel supported, from hiring students to work in a number of diverse programs, to providing individual and small group support various courses. Each program has its own approach and while we are reaching a 10% of the USF population each year there is much more we can do to serve the university community.

Technology

As mentioned previously, technology is playing a larger role in the delivery of educational services given that getting an education no longer means going to a physical classroom. It is not only the decentralization of education but the increase in students' responsibilities that have led to the need to provide support online. Technology has become a very popular topic of discussion at learning center conferences, especially as it relates to educational websites and apps, platforms that allow for the smooth delivery of online tutoring, and tips on how to deliver engaging online training sessions. We are working with faculty in the School of Nursing and Health Professions, School of Management and the College of Arts and Sciences to collect and organize a list of online resources recommended by faculty for their students. This list will be posted to the Learning Center website to allow easy access to any individual who wishes to use it. Currently the Learning Center site has a small list of educational

resource links as well as short study skills videos on specific topics which we plan to add to in the future. The Learning Center also provides online tutoring through Canvas but the site currently gets little traffic. We are working to improve the experience of the users and have purchased cameras, headsets, and stylus pads in pens to for tutors to use when working from the Center. Should online tutoring become more popular we anticipate computer access issues for our tutors because we have only four desktops which are constant use by visitors to the center. Online trainings are currently provided for tutors and we are investigating new apps to give tutors an opportunity to engage more with their peers.

Professional Development

Professional Development for learning center staff has become a hot topic. As student populations become more and more diverse, professionals want to find new ways to work with a larger pool of students. Learning center professionals have increased their attendance at conferences, but due to funding limitations they must often rely on the internet for opportunities to learn and develop professionally. While we are attending annual national conferences, the LC staff also takes advantage of many webinars. The webinars allow the professional staff of the Learning Center to give student staff an opportunity to participate in professional development from those outside of the university.

It was suggested during a session at the 2014 CRLA Conference that professional development needs to become a greater priority in the lives of the student affairs professional. The presenter recommended setting aside time each week when you are not likely to be interrupted to engage in some form of professional development, whether it be reading an article or Power Point, surfing the chat boards, listening to podcasts or attending an actual seminar. We

have become more intentional about taking time at least once a week to improve on our own skills and knowledge in order to better serve our ever changing student population.

Improved and Expanded Assessment

Greater focus on assessment has also become a trend. What is good assessment and how do we do/use it has been a topic discussion at recent conferences. Demand for our services increase yearly and funding tends to remain stagnant. There are also many new programs popping on campuses competing for university/college funds. LC's must argue for more funds or to maintain the funds they have. There is a greater need to justify what we are doing is relevant and making a difference at our institutions. For at least the last five years, assessing our programs and services to measure student, faculty and staff satisfaction has been, and will continue to be, a priority. We will begin to work more closely with Center for Institutional Planning and Effectiveness (CIPE) to tie student tutoring and employment to a greater satisfaction in experience at the university as well as greater persistence.

Student Development

In a recent professional conference that the Assistant Director attended in January 2015 discussed the idea of infusing more of a positive, proactive and intrusive approach to the way students can be supported academically, professionally and personally. The Appreciative Inquiry model draws on the strengths and potential from each individual to develop cohesive, co-created goals. The Appreciative Inquiry model is comprised of six phases that can be followed sequentially throughout the relationship between advisor and student. Find the Six Phases of Appreciative Inquiry in the [Training Topics](#) Appendix.

This model will be used in working with students to help streamline their academic progress and professional growth, specifically when meeting with front desk staff, Project Success/College Success students, any student referrals as well as with the Project Success coaches and graduate assistants. Challenges that may ensue with this model may be that students might simply not follow through on their part of the plan -- motivation, personal issues and/or other outside influences could impact their abilities to achieve the goals they've set for themselves. However, as this model has an element of the proactive advising approach, constant check-ins and meetings with our students might motivate the student to get back on track and make them realize that staff at USF are really here for them and would like to see them succeed.