LEARNING CENTER
SELF-STUDY 2022-2023

I. MISSION

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

   The vision of The Learning Center is to empower students to achieve their academic and personal goals via opportunities for enhanced learning, interpersonal development, personal responsibility, and leadership. Our three core functions are: (1.) to provide course specific academic support; (2.) to provide academic skills development initiatives; and (3.) to provide high impact leadership and engagement opportunities.

2. **What is the department's mission? Please provide the department's mission Statement.**

   The mission of The Learning Center is to provide students with 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' self-confidence and help them reach academic achievement and performance goals.

3. **Describe how the department's mission is aligned with the University of San Francisco's Mission and strategic priorities.**

   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 supports the University's mission by "supporting investment in learning and studying…respect[ing] individual learning styles, and creating an environment conducive

to learning" ([Learning 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 website](#)). 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" ([USF VMV website](#)) 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" ([USF VMV website](#)), the staff is trained not only to bring in their own experiences but to also respect and utilize each individual's experiences in the learning process. Finally, the Center supports "a culture of service that respects and promotes the dignity of every person" ([USF VMV website](#)) through our high-impact leadership and engagement opportunities.

II. HISTORY

1. What is the recent history of the department and what are the most noteworthy issues faced and changes made over the last five years?

Since 2016, the Learning Center has experienced several changes to our location, scheduling system, tutor outreach programs, study skills support offerings, and professional and paraprofessional staffing. In 2016, the Learning Center began its transition from the TutorTrac platform to Salesforce. The integration of Salesforce was part of a university effort to track student success and share information across divisions. The Learning, Writing, and Speaking Center's got in on the ground floor of this initiative which allowed us to tailor the platform to meet our specific scheduling and reporting needs.

In 2017, the Learning Center welcomed a new Assistant Director and Program Assistant, and again in 2021 and 2022. Later in that same year, the Learning, Writing, and Speaking Centers moved to a single location, relocating to the Gleeson Library. Prior to this move, the Speaking Center was located in Malloy Hall (the School of Management building) and the Learning and Writing Centers were located in Cowell Hall (the School of Nursing building. In Fall 2018, the Learning Center hired its first Graduate Intern for Peer Tutoring. Adding this position allowed us

to offer greater support to the Peer Tutoring staff and increase our ability to rapidly respond to student needs. The 2020 COVID outbreak impacted the Learning Center's budget which led to the suspension of the intern position. Currently, the Peer Tutoring Program is supervised by the Learning Center Director and three Lead Peer Tutors.

Prior to fall 2017, the Learning Center housed two tutoring outreach programs, Families and Youth in Transition Program (FYIT) and the America Reads Program. At the end of Spring 2017, the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) made the decision to sever its relationship with USF and utilize SFUSD staff as tutors for the FYIT program. At the end of Spring 2018, after a year of negotiations and coordination, the America Reads Program transitioned from the Learning Center to the McCarthy Center for Public Service and the Common Good at USF. The transition of these two programs freed up Learning Center staff to focus solely on the academic needs of USF students.

Since the fall of 2017, the Learning Center has put a greater focus on its study skills initiatives. Development of resources, workshops, and academic skills coaching, and improvements in the Project Success Program. Learning Center staff created a comprehensive study skills program that provides workshops, academic skills coaching and online resources. Study skills topics include time-management and organization, active-study, test-taking and test-preparation, motivation and goal-setting, learning styles, and group study. The majority of workshops are provided by-request via a form on the [Learning Center's study skills web page](#). Academic skills coaching appointments are provided regularly during the fall, spring, and summer terms and students can schedule one-hour appointments using the Salesforce platform. Finally, all resources provided to students through workshops and during coaching appointments are available to anyone on the internet through the Learning Center's study skills web page.

2. Does the department form collaborative partnerships with other units within the University (e.g., academic, co-curricular/non-academic, administrative, etc.)? If so, what are the collaborations and how is the work coordinated within and across the various units?

The Learning Center's collaborative partnerships are essential to all of our programs and services. Without forming and building these relationships we cannot as effectively support students on our campus. The work is coordinated by each of the three professional staff members in the LC.. Currently, the Program Assistant serves as the liaison for most of our

marketing-related collaborations and general communications with other on-campus departments. The Assistant Director serves as the liaison for Supplemental Instruction (SI) and Academic Skills Development initiatives (which includes skills coaching, workshops and Project Success). The Director serves as the liaison for Peer Tutoring and Peer Led Team Learning (PLTL). A chart including schools/departments/programs and the nature of our on-campus collaboration partnerships is included below.

School/Department/Program	Nature of collaborative partnership / staff roles and connections	Specific programs/initiatives tied to the partnership
Writing Center (https://myusf.usfca.edu/lwsc/writing-center)	-Co-located physically and online -Streamlined marketing materials -Streamlined presence at on-campus events -Streamlined appointment scheduling processes	NA
Speaking Center (https://myusf.usfca.edu/lwsc/speaking-center)	-Co-located physically and online -Streamlined marketing materials -Streamlined presence at on-campus events -Streamlined appointment scheduling processes	NA
Gleeson Library	-Physically located within -Use of study space for services	-Tutorpalooza (Finals Study Session)

School/Department/Program	Nature of collaborative partnership / staff roles and connections	Specific programs/initiatives tied to the partnership
Center for Academic and Student Achievement (CASA) (https://myusf.usfca.edu/casa) (https://myusf.usfca.edu/casa/programs)	-Referrals to resources -Nominations for programs -Marketing materials posted -Leadership and engagement opportunities *-Considered a "sister department"*	-Peer Tutoring -Academic Skills Coaching -Project Success -Supplemental Instruction -Peer Led Team Learning -Peer Leadership (Student Employment) nominations and recommendation processes -Back on Track Program (managed by CASA) -Muscat Scholars Program (managed by CASA) -PACT Program (managed by CASA)
Student Disability Services (SDS) (https://www.usfca.edu/student-disability-services)	-Referrals to resources -Nominations for programs -Marketing materials posted *-Considered a "sister department"*	-Peer Tutoring -Academic Skills Coaching -"Project Success" -Supplemental Instruction

School/Department/Program	Nature of collaborative partnership / staff roles and connections	Specific programs/initiatives tied to the partnership
		-Peer Led Team Learning -Extra time requests (managed by SDS)
University Athletics	-Referrals to resources -Nominations for programs -Marketing materials posted *-NOTE: New Director of Academic Success for student-athletes hired in January 2020; opportunity to boost or expand this partnership*	-Peer Tutoring -Academic Skills Coaching -Project Success -Supplemental Instruction -Peer Led Team Learning
School of Nursing and Health Professions (https://www.usfca.edu/nursing)	-Faculty resources, including "syllabus blurbs" (https://myusf.usfca.edu/lwsc/facultyinformation) -Collaborative learning programs that require faculty cooperation (SI) -In-class (cover your class) workshops -Leadership and engagement opportunities	-Peer Tutoring (NURS courses at both the graduate and undergraduate level) -Supplemental Instruction (BIOL 113, BIOL 115, NURS 220, NURS 272) -Academic Skills Coaching -Academic Skills Workshops -Peer Leadership (Student Employment) nominations and

School/Department/Program	Nature of collaborative partnership / staff roles and connections	Specific programs/initiatives tied to the partnership
		recommendation processes
College of Arts & Sciences (https://www.usfca.edu/arts-sciences)	-Faculty resources, including syllabus blurb (https://myusf.usfca.edu/lwsc/facultyinformation) -Collaborative learning programs that require faculty cooperation (SI and PLTL) -In-class (cover your class) workshops -Leadership and engagement opportunities	-Peer Tutoring (primarily ECON, BIOL, CHEM, MATH, and language courses) -Supplemental Instruction (BIOL 105, BIOL 106, BIOL 134) -Peer Led Team Learning (CHEM 111, CHEM 113, CHEM 230, CHEM 231) -Academic Skills Coaching -Academic Skills Workshops -Peer Leadership (Student Employment) nominations and recommendation processes
School of Education (https://www.usfca.edu/education)	-Faculty resources, including "syllabus blurb" (https://myusf.usfca.edu/lwsc/facultyinformation) -In-class (cover your class) workshops -Leadership and engagement opportunities	-Academic Skills Coaching -Academic Skills Workshops -Marketing employment opportunities for graduate students within the "Project Success" program
School of Management (https://www.usfca.edu/	-Faculty resources, including "syllabus blurbs"	-Peer Tutoring (primarily BUS,

School/Department/Program	Nature of collaborative partnership / staff roles and connections	Specific programs/initiatives tied to the partnership
management)	(https://myusf.usfca.edu/lwsc/facultyinformation) -In-class (cover your class) workshops	ECON, MATH courses) -Academic Skills Coaching -Academic Skills Workshops
ISSS (https://www.usfca.edu/isss)	-Promotion of programs and services -Marketing materials distributed through office	-Academic English Support -Peer Tutoring
Additional Campus Locations	-Support for Additional Locations and Graduate Students webpage (https://myusf.usfca.edu/lwsc/support-additional-campuses-and-graduate-students)	-Peer Tutoring -Academic Skills Coaching -Academic Skills Workshops
New Student & Family Programs (https://myusf.usfca.edu/orientation)	-Promotion of programs & services -Training workshops for Student Orientation Leaders	-Parent and Family newsletters -Presentations at New Student Orientation each semester -Open Houses during "Weeks of Welcome" -Academic Skills Workshops during "Weeks of Welcome"
Student Leadership & Engagement	-Promotion of programs & services	-SLE's "The Phoenix" e-newsletter

School/Department/Program	Nature of collaborative partnership / staff roles and connections	Specific programs/initiatives tied to the partnership
(https://www.usfca.edu/student-life/student-activities/leadership-engagement)	-Trainings workshops for student organizations	-Print poster dissemination -Tabling at over 20 on-campus events
Office of Student Housing (https://www.usfca.edu/housing)	-Promotion of programs & services -Marketing materials posted -Workshops in the Resident Advisors (RAs) training course	
Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) (https://www.usfca.edu/counseling-psychological-services/services)	-Promotion of programs & services -Referrals to resources -Marketing materials posted -LC/CAPS cross-training sessions each academic year	-Academic Skills Coaching -Project Success

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

The most recent program review provided recommendations in four key areas.

1. Strategic Planning, Organizational Structure, and Leadership

    a. Align the Learning Center with USF's charge by redeploying community programs to another better-fitting unit on campus, such as the McCarthy Center

     i.   As noted above in Section 1, the Learning Center relinquished the Families and Youth in Transition (FYIT) and America Reads (AR) programs in 2017 and 2018 respectively. While the America Reads program remained at USF, continuing to provide USF students valuable community engagement opportunities while earning pay, the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) opted to sever its partnership with USF as it relates to the FYIT program. Instead of operating with the use of college student tutors, SFUSD chose to use district employees.

b. Reassessment of the Learning Center within the structure of the university and reassignment of the director's immediate supervisor to an individual better positioned to advocate on the Center's behalf.

     i.   There has been no movement on this recommendation.

c. Clarify the Learning Center's relationship to CASA in terms of function (how referrals are made and assessed) and space

     i.   In Fall 2017, Learning, Writing, and Speaking Centers relocated to ground level of Gleeson Library, adjacent to SDS another unit under CASA; The Learning Center Staff are regularly invited to join in on CASA staff meetings and activities. The Associate Vice Provost over CASA represents the LC when attending high level meetings with USF stakeholders. With the adoption of Salesforce in Spring 2017, LC and CASA are better able to share information between units, working with the ITS Salesforce Team to implement a referral process and track student progress. In 2019, an automated referral was made possible through Salesforce.

d. Conduct an onsite visit to a flagship learning center.

     i.   Learning Center staff conducted on-site visits to Learning Centers at California State East Bay and Stanford during the summer of 2016.

2. Assessment

a. Establish a process for observation, assessment and coaching for new and veteran tutors.

   i. All Learning Center programs now utilize staff observations, either peer-to-peer and/or supervisor to leader. The LC administration will continue to identify opportunities to implement supervisor observations into all LC programs.

b. Produce retention reports including grades of SI participants to distribute to SI professors, SI leaders, and administration, with particular focus on the transition from freshman to sophomore year.

   i. The Learning Center utilizes Salesforce to track student participation and final grades. Each semester, the SI and PLTL programs deliver programmatic reports to faculty partners along with their deans and department chairs. In Fall 2019, LC staff delivered the first annual report covering the 2018-2019 academic year. This report was shared with student life and other stakeholders.

c. Development of semestral or annual action plans that identify the criteria for successful student and tutor learning.

   i. Beginning in Summer 2018, Learning Center Leadership began the process of developing a blueprint document. "The purpose of this document is to outline the description, scope, learning outcomes, measures/key performance indicators, and assessment methods for each initiative within the department. The structure of the document ties each initiative to its correlating goal within the organization. The document also begins by describing the mission, vision, and core functions of the department." The first Planning and Performance Blueprints were completed during the 2018-2019 academic year and continue to be utilized each fall and spring term.

3. Operations, Process, Procedures, and Customer Service

   a. Bring Learning Center into ADA compliance with a walkway that adheres to ADA

standards.

b. Relocate the Learning Center into a central and visible space on campus.

c. Provide basic office supplies, including dry erase boards and copier access.

    i. The first three recommendations were acted upon with the Learning, Writing, and Speaking Centers' move to Gleeson Library.

d. Identify faculty allies and improve relationships with faculty.

    i. Learning Center staff have worked to develop relationships with faculty, department chairs, and deans taking the opportunity to meet or at least provide regular updates. The continued support of the AVP of CASA and VP of Student Life to identify and make introductions to potential allies is greatly appreciated.

e. Unify Learning, Writing and Speaking Centers so that monies can be appropriately distributed to compensate the Learning Center for its support of the Writing Center.

    i. There has been no progress on this recommendation.

f. Increase the student tutor budget or review existing allocations by course.

    i. The Learning Center has enjoyed consistent increases in the student staff budget.

4. Employment and Staff Culture

a. Re-establish an advisory council composed of faculty members invested in the Center's programs.

    i. Re-establishing an advisory council continues to be a priority but is a work in progress.

b. Redefine the Learning Center director role to focus on tutoring USF students, building campus partnerships, distributing assessment data, and improving the

director's visibility and the Center's perception on campus.

    i.   No progress has been made on this recommendation.

c.   Clarify the Learning Center assistant director's duties with respect to the mentorship of tutors.

    i.   A new assistant director was onboarded in spring 2017. Due to their previous work experiences and passions and with the transferring of the community tutoring programs out of the Learning Center, the assistant director welcomed the opportunity to oversee Project Success and Supplemental Instruction Programs, and the Academic Skills Development initiatives. Supervision of the SI graduate assistant and Project Success coaches has increased the assistant director's opportunity to provide leadership and mentorship to student leaders.

d.   Redefine the administrative assistant position as either a role supporting the director of a combined Learning and Writing Center or one supporting only the Learning Center.

    i.   The Learning Center program assistant is responsible for the supervision of front desk staff and general office management. While the front desk staff are responsible for supporting all students and staff with business in the LWSC, the Writing and Speaking Center directors have taken on increased responsibility related to scheduling changes, student and staff concerns, promotion of services, and website and social media maintenance.

e.   Professionalize the tutor positions with training, team-building, and the maintenance of regular hours

    i.   Learning Center leadership continues to find new ways to improve the experience and development of peer tutors and other peer leaders. Peer tutors are required to create a regular schedule over the course of the term. Required synchronous tutor training modules are provided every two to three weeks for new tutors and every month for returning tutors.

Training is more interactive and requires extensive group discussion and assignments. Each semester, the Learning Center celebrates their peer leaders either during Peer Leader Appreciation week during the fall term and Peer Leader Awards during the spring term. The LC continues to request additional feedback from student leaders to ensure that their experience working for the Learning Center is positive and mutually beneficial.

III. DEPARTMENT GOALS

1. What are the current goals of the department?

1. **Advance student learning, self-regulation*, and academic progress** by providing course specific academic support in high-need** first- and second-year courses.

2. **Increase student persistence and self-regulation*** by providing individual and small-group academic skills development initiatives focused on independent learning strategies.

3. **Advance student engagement and leadership skills** through high impact academic and co-curricular activities for USF students serving as tutors and other L.C. peer leaders.

*The Learning Center's definition of self-regulated learning is…"an active, constructive process whereby learners set goals for their learning and then attempt to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behavior, guided and constrained by their goals and the contextual features in the environment" (Pintrich, 2000, p. 453).

**The Learning Center's definition of "high-need" courses: courses with a high percentage of DFW grades each term and/or for which total student usage averages 50 hours or more of course-specific-support each term

2. For each goal, list measurable performance objectives and/or student learning outcomes (What students should know, value, and be able to do as a result of engaging in department programs or utilizing department services.).

KPI's

All three goals mentioned in the previous answer correlate with different Learning Center programs. Each program within each goal has numerous and specific Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) to ensure that we are effectively able to measure outcomes of each program and thus determine the effectiveness in contributing to our overall goals.

The first goal encompasses, Peer Tutoring, Supplemental Instruction (SI), and Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL). The second goal refers to Project Success, and Academic Skills Coaching, workshops, and online resources, and the third goal encompasses our Peer Leadership Program, marketing, outreach and communications as well as our Front Desk customer service.

Goal #1

- Peer Tutoring SLO's:

    - SLO 1: *Students will advance course knowledge and increase academic persistence in high-need, traditionally difficult courses through tailored, peer-led platforms*

    - SLO 2: *Students will develop collaborative partnerships with tutors (as academic role models) and apply academic study skills and learning strategies*

- Supplemental Instruction (SI) Program SLO's:

    - SLO 1: *Students will advance course knowledge and increase academic persistence in high-need, traditionally difficult courses through tailored, peer-led platforms (DFW rates < 25% of graded course enrollment)*

    - SLO 2: *Students will develop collaborative partnerships with SI Leaders (as academic role models) and apply academic study skills and learning strategies while developing understanding of course content*

- Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL) SLO's:

    - SLO 1: *Students will advance course knowledge and increase academic persistence and progression within sequential General Chemistry course*

- ○ SLO 2: *Students will develop collaborative partnerships with PLTL Leaders (as academic role models) and apply academic study skills and learning strategies while developing understanding of course content*

Goal #2

- Project Success Program SLO's:

  - ○ SLO 1: *Students will be able to articulate resources and/or demonstrate effective academic skills and self-regulated learning strategies as a result of working with a Project Success coach*

  - ○ SLO 2: *Students will increase confidence and/or display increased confidence (perceived by coach) in their abilities to implement strategies and try resources included in their personal plans for academic success as a result of working with a Project Success coach*

- Academic Skills Coaching (ASC) SLO's

  - ○ SLO 1: *Students will explore new academic success strategies and resources that will be applicable to their academic needs and/or study routines*

  - ○ SLO 2: *Students will increase confidence in their abilities to design a personal plan for academic success and/or students will indicate an action-oriented level of commitment regarding changing their academic situations*

- Academic Skills Development Workshops SLO's

  - ○ SLO 1: *Students will explore academic success strategies and resources that will be applicable to their academic needs and/or study routines (related to specific workshop topic)*

  - ○ SLO 2: *Students will increase confidence in their academic abilities and levels of preparedness (related to specific workshop topic)*

- Academic Skills Online Resources SLO's

- ○ SLO 1: *Students will explore academic success strategies and resources that will be applicable to their academic needs and/or study routines*

Goal #3

- Learning Center Peer Leadership Program SLO's

  - ○ SLO 1: *Students will gain leadership skills through participation in training sessions and through facilitating appointments/sessions*

  - ○ SLO 2: *Students will increase confidence in applying skills during appointments/sessions through participation in training sessions*

- Learning Center Marketing, Outreach, & Communications SLO's

  - ○ SLO 1: *The USF community will have increased levels of awareness of Learning Center programs and initiatives.*

- Front Desk Customer Service SLO's

  - ○ SLO 1: *Front Desk staff member will demonstrate effective knowledge of all Learning Center programs (Peer Tutoring, SI, PLTL, ASC, Project Success, etc.) and will act as an academic resource for students*

  - ○ SLO 2: *Front Desk staff member will demonstrate exceptional customer service skills and other professional development topics that are explored during monthly meetings*

  - ○ SLO 3: *Front Desk staff member will demonstrate effective knowledge of all Learning Center resources and initiatives (peer leadership opportunities, upcoming events, and any new initiatives outside the scope of specific programs) and will act as an academic resource for students*

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

- The Learning Center's goals support the Center's mission of supporting student learning, fostering student development, and helping students achieve academic success. The

Learning Center is a student-centered department that aims to provide a welcoming space. The Center empowers students to achieve their academic and personal goals by providing opportunities to enhance and accept personal responsibility for their learning as well as develop interpersonal communication and leadership skills. We support students' efforts to learn strategies that further their academic success, encourage collaboration, and foster professional and personal growth. Each student learning outcome was strategically developed to ensure that the focus of each goal and program has a long term vision of creating lifelong learners who are fully engaged in their education.

IV. QUALITY ASSURANCE

1. What programs and/or services does the department provide? Whom (specifically) do they serve?

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

Course Specific Support

- **Peer Tutoring:** Peer tutoring provides USF Students with course specific support in individual or small group settings. Tutoring sessions are led by a peer who received an A- or higher in the course, holds a strong understanding of the material and is recommended by a faculty member. One hour sessions provide content support as well as foster the development of successful learning and study strategies. Peer Tutoring is focused on supporting high need courses and every effort is made to provide tutors for students who request our services. During the 2022-2023 academic year the Learning Center provided tutoring support for 85 courses with 377 sections in the College of Arts and Sciences, School of Management, and School of Nursing and Health Professions, serving 560 undergraduate and graduate students during the fall and spring terms.

- **Supplemental Instruction (SI):** 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. During the 2022-2023 academic year, the SI program supported seven courses within the Nursing and Biology Programs and served 425 students during the fall and spring terms.

- **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. During the 2022-2023 academic year, the PLTL program supported General Chemistry I and II and Organic Chemistry I and II and served 78 undergraduates during the fall and spring terms.

Academic Skills Development

- **Project Success:** Project Success is a long-standing Learning Center program that matches trained graduate students with undergraduate students in need of additional academic support.The participating students are referred by professional staff within Student Disability Services (SDS), and The Center for Academic and Student Achievement (CASA). Students who participate commit to making adjustments in their academic routines and strategies. Project Success Coaches work individually with students on a weekly, regularly-scheduled basis. They partner with students to help them develop study skills and positive academic behaviors, including (but not limited to) time management, prioritization, note-taking, test-taking, critical reading, college-level writing, personal responsibility and goal-setting. Paid Project Success Coaches go through an extensive training program and are provided with many tools and resources. During the 2022-2023 academic year, Project Success Coaches supported 52 students and provided 1228.3 contact hours.

- **Academic Skills Workshops:** By request from faculty members and student organizations, and as part of our "Final Stretch to Success" week at the end of semester, Learning Center Workshops focus on improving academic skills in the areas of time management, test-taking and exam preparation, active study, note-taking & reading strategies, critical thinking & metacognition, and finals preparation. Workshops are open to all students. During the 2022-2023 academic year, eighteen requested and

scheduled workshops were provided to USF students and staff. [See Appendix for list of workshops](#).

- **Academic Skills Coaching:** All USF students are eligible to meet with Academic Skills Coaches for an individualized appointment to support the development of and improve study skills within the following areas: time management and organization, prioritization, planning, test-taking and exam preparation, positive thinking, active study, structured study time, note-taking strategies, critical reading, motivation and goal-setting, procrastination, learning styles and preferences and more. During the 2022-2023 academic year, academic skills coaches met with 33 students for 40 hours.

- **Academic Skills Development for English Learners (AES):** The Learning Center Assistant Director (who has a background in Teaching English as a Second Language) and a graduate student from our School of Education's TESL program offer assistance to students expanding their academic English skills while making the transition to the American classroom. The AES coach 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. During the 2022-2023 academic year, academic skills coaches met with 4 students for 21 hours.

See Appendix for Programmatic Position Descriptions.

2. How does the department learn about the needs of those served and obtain feedback regarding programs or services delivered?

The Learning Center learns of student needs and levels of satisfaction using multiple assessment and feedback tools. The four main constituents/stakeholders that provide feedback are (1.) students, (2.) campus partners/faculty members, (3.) peer leaders/educators (who are student employees of the LC), and (4.) LC professional staff.

Each semester the Center employs a variety of assessment and evaluation instruments to gather feedback regarding programs. Some are used consistently throughout the academic year and others are offered at specific times, such as the semester midpoint or at the end of the term. The "Blueprint" documents outline the description, scope, learning outcomes,

measures/key performance indicators, and assessment methods for each initiative within the department. The structure of the documents tie each initiative to its correlating goal within the organization. Part I, the *Planning Blueprint*, is completed prior to the start of the academic year, typically finalized by the first day of the Fall term. Part II, the *Performance Blueprint*, is completed at the conclusion of the academic year, typically after Spring term grades are posted.

See Appendix for Blueprint documents.

Additionally, the LC Front Desk staff, with their customer service training and role as the Learning Center's "front line" help assess the LC's programs and services with their daily direct observations of LC operations. These first-year through senior-level students manage incoming calls, emails, chat boxes, and walk-ins. The Front Desk staff provide essential insight about what students are asking for, what is unclear, and what could be done better to improve the participant experiences. The LC Program Assistant supervises all front-desk operations and communicates feedback received to other constituents.

3. How does the department know it is meeting the stakeholder's needs?
When considering whether the department is living out its mission or meeting stakeholder needs, the LC certainly considers feedback from campus partners/faculty members as well as the perspectives and anecdotal evidence of internal professional staff. However, the primary "stakeholders" are currently-enrolled students and so they are the main focus. Key performance indicators (KPIs) for programmatic learning outcomes include an array of measures, such as increased confidence levels, improved grades, and satisfaction levels. For example, the department calculates:

- the percentage of participants indicating increased confidence in the ability to succeed after participating / interacting with a peer leader

- the percentage of participants' grades reported as ABC in comparison to non-participants (specifically for SI and PLTL)

- the percentage of program participants viewing the LC peer leader as a role model for students

- the percentage of participants indicating application of a new academic success strategy

within their academic/study routines as a result of participation

- the percentage of workshop participants selecting "strongly agree" or "agree" related to recommending the workshop during future semesters

- the percentage of participants' overall satisfaction with LC Peer Leader interactions

These are examples and not an all-inclusive list. The LC Mission steers all of our assessment processes, and USF's Division of Student Life learning outcomes and institutional learning outcomes also serve as guides. In accordance with guidelines sent out by the Division of Student Life, the LC compiles an annual assessment summary of student learning outcomes.

See Appendix for Blueprint documents and the Division of Student Life SLO Assessment Summary.

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

The Learning Center utilizes the Planning and Performance Blueprints in the process of planning, decision-making, and evaluation.   The Director, Assistant Director, and Program Assistant, guided by the blueprint documents and assessment results, work with the student leadership staff of each program to develop proximal goals to reach the Center's overarching goals objectives. The staff leaders meet weekly as a group and once a week individually with their direct supervisor to discuss current issues and plan for the current semester's assessment needs and plans.

5. How do stakeholders learn about and access the programs and/or services provided by the department?

Marketing and communications are incorporated as one of the key initiatives within the Learning Center with the goal to increase levels of awareness in the USF community of Learning Center programs and initiatives. Efforts to reach the entire university with general information about our services, targeted outreach to share important updates, as well as information about events and peer leadership opportunities are prioritized.

Communication is presented in a variety of ways including but not limited to, presentations, newsletters, paper marketing (brochures, posters), social media (Instagram, X, Facebook), a

peer leadership nomination process, and emails. All forms of marketing are created up to accessibility standards to ensure the entire community has equal access to information. In 2018, the Learning Center strengthened our partnership with the Salesforce team and joined a project to create a centralized student hub for the USF student community. This platform allowed our appointment scheduler to be more accessible to the student community and in a location where students can also access other frequently utilized resources.

6. **How does the department 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 compares itself to learning assistance programs (LAP) within Jesuit institutions with diverse student populations in urban mid-sized cities or cities on the West Coast of the US. Comparable institutions include Loyola Marymount in Los Angeles, Gonzaga University in Spokane, Seattle University, Loyola University of New Orleans, and Loyola University of Chicago. Observations of the following areas are included in the [Comparison of Learning Centers - 2020](#):

- Reporting Structure
- Programs
- Staffing
- Budget
- Responsibilities

V. BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

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

FY	2023		2022		2021		2020	
	Budget	Spent	Budget	Spent	Budget	Spent	Budget	Spent
Total	292,180	140,365 *	281,323	203,989	246,881	175,750	267,262	228,965
Student Staff	275,007	147,261 *	264,150	214,831	232,583	176,833	250,089	235,825
Gen. Op.	17,173	-6,896*	17,173	-10,842	14298	-1083	17,173	-6,860

*YTD as of 2.22.23

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

The budgetary needs of the Learning Center fluctuates with each academic year. Learning Center spending on student staff salaries can be unpredictable. While many offices depend on work-study funds to meet their staffing needs and stay within budget, when hiring peer tutors, SI leaders, and PLTL leaders, the Learning Center cannot use work-study eligibility as a primary hiring criteria. Instead, the Learning Center must focus on academic achievement and ability to assist with study skills. Although the budget available for student staff and operations generally tends to be enough to meet student needs, funds are increasingly limited and the Learning Center is hindered from meeting demands for expanding Supplemental Instruction, Peer-Led Team Learning, and Peer Tutoring programs. It is important to note that work-study has assisted the Learning Center in staying under budget, but as mentioned above, work-study cannot be a primary factor in identifying potential staff.

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

The Learning Center staff have worked hard to be as efficient as possible in its processes. Peer tutors are required to make ⅓ of their appointment slots available to small groups (up to three students) and tutoring is available by appointment only for one hour at a time. PLTL leaders earn course credit for their participation in weekly training and are monetarily compensated for their time facilitating their weekly workshops and one hour of prep time. The Project Success program is funded primarily by the departments that nominate participants, leaving the Learning Center to cover only the cost of staff development. Finally, while previously staff could work seven days a week during final exam periods, holidays, and breaks, peer leaders are now limited to working six days a week when classes are in session. Each of these changes over the last 12 years have allowed us to operate well below budget, however our ability to onboard work-study staff has had a great deal of impact on student staff expenditures.

4. What improvements are possible through reallocating existing resources?

We are not sure what resources reallocations could aid in our ability to meet goals and objectives but we welcome ideas from the external review team.

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

There is increasing demand for PLTL for Physics, Computer Science and mathematics courses. Also, the Learning Center is currently supporting only 100-level Biology courses and two 200-level Nursing courses. Additional resources are needed in order to hire a student leader for each Supplemental Instruction section. The budget covers 12 sections but each semester more sections are taught by other professors. Ideally our budget should cover all of these.

Additionally, we need to provide updated textbooks for student reference as well as computers for student staff. All of these current resources are notably outdated due to budget constraints.

VI. ASSESSMENT

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

The Learning Center takes time to assess its administrative processes, programs and services in the following areas: student performance, staff performance/service delivery, staff

development, and the Center's leadership.

Student Performance

Academic performance of students using the center 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 participation in 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

Peer leaders provide feedback on their performance through a standard evaluation form (see appendix). Here the staff member can share thoughts on their areas of strength and areas of growth. Stakeholders such as students or instructors also comment on the performance of staff members based on their personal experience with the individuals or groups.

Staff Development

At the end of each training, or at the end of the semester, peer leaders are 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. Feedback forms and reports from the 2022-23 academic year are included in the appendix.

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. Some samples of this feedback are also included in the appendix.

Evaluation Documents and Results

All Evaluation Documents and Spring 2023 Assessment Results can be found in the Appendix.

2. List the number of students served during the most recent academic year (2022-2023), and the department's role in tracking their success upon completion of programs and/or services.

The Learning Center supported 1107 undergraduate and graduate students during the 2022-2023 academic year. The following tables provide a breakdown of the number of unique students supported during the fall and spring terms by program.

Program	Fall 2022		Spring 2023	
	Unique Student	Contact Time	Unique Student	Contact Time
AES	2	9	3	12
ASC	26	33	7	7
Peer Tutoring	343	1956	312	1757.5
Peer-Led Team Learning	56	1056	34	668
Project Success	26	513.6	35	714.7
Supplemental Instruction	266	1142	232	1178.5
Workshop	125	144	44	75.4
Grand Total	**723**	**4853.6**	**590**	**4413.05**

As part of the Performance Blueprint completion process, the Learning Center tracks students' successful completion of courses (pass rates) using Salesforce reporting, and perceived achievement and development due to participation in Learning Center programs using mid-semester and end-of-semester feedback forms. This data is available in the appendix.

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

a. Describe how data gleaned from meaningful assessments have helped the department improve critical processes, key functions, stakeholder needs, delivery of programs and/or services and identification of best practices

The Learning Center uses data gleaned from assessment to determine degrees of support needed from semester to semester. Examples include the number of tutors needed for each subject, whether to continue to employ specific tutors (evaluation data), which courses to offer SI or PLTL support for, and how many Project Success Coaches to hire. We also learn where we need to make minor adjustments to services, improve communication or marketing efforts etc.

b. Describe how data collected are used to inform and support other units (academic and/or non-academic/co-curricular) in the Institution. Share some reporting data.

The Learning Center shares data regularly with Student Life, the Provost's office and academic departments in order to keep colleagues across campus informed. Examples of these reports can be found in the appendix.

c. Describe how staff/administrators of the department analyze trends of department productivity.

The Director and Assistant Director of the Learning Center regularly analyze data collected in order to determine tutor usage, and SI and PLTL attendance. We make decisions about hiring tutors and SI/PLTL leaders and which courses to support by analyzing the data collected. We also examine how often students view specific pages on our website and make decisions about marketing or website design accordingly. Finally, each semester we look at specific subject grades earned by students who received tutoring and compare them with students who did not. We make decisions about individual tutors as well as subjects supported based on this information. Examples are included in our appendix.

d. Describe changes made to the department using evaluation/assessment data.

Typically, the Learning Center leadership team utilizes training feedback to determine the needs and desires of the peer leaders. While we do have a structure to programmatic training, staff

feedback helps us understand how to best tailor the modules to the current needs of the students.

Student feedback and attendance/utilization records help Learning Center leadership identify the need for changes in staffing, scheduling, or training. The same can be said for faculty feedback.

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

There are several factors that have facilitated the Learning Center's ability to meet its goals. These include the ability to record and track student participation using Salesforce, regular and targeted outreach/interactions with faculty, staff, and students, USF students who choose to serve as leaders and role models in the Learning Center, the diverse expertise of USF faculty and staff who lend their time to help support and train Learning Center peer leaders, and the support of Student Life colleagues who help us connect with new students on a regular basis.

Factors that have impeded the Learning Center's ability to meet its goals are limited human resources. The Learning Center proudly utilizes student leaders to meet its goals and support students. Consistently, the Learning Center is challenged in identifying potential peer leaders who are confident in their ability to support their peers, willing to support their peers in a range of subjects, and or have the availability necessary to take on a Learning Center peer leadership role.

5. How do staff roles support the department's delivery of programs and/or services? How do staff roles bridge gaps in programs and/or services?

Learning Center professional staff consist of the Director, Assistant Director, and Program Assistant. The Learning Center Director supervises the Peer Tutoring Program and the Peer-Led Team Learning Program. The Assistant Director Supervises the Supplemental Instruction Program, and the Project Success Program. The Program Assistant supervises the Front Desk/Administrative student staff. As supervisors of these programs, the Learning Center professional staff provide peer leaders with support and training. The majority of the Learning Center services are delivered by USF undergraduate and graduate students. Where there are gaps in support, the Learning Center Assistant Director and sometimes Director facilitate

one-on-one Academic Skills Coaching and group workshops.

6. What are identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the department?

The Learning Center's strengths include flexibility, collaborative relationships, experienced leadership, and the support, awareness and engagement of faculty. The Learning Center administration puts the student first in all things, this includes our student staff. The size and diversity of the Learning Center's peer leaders provide opportunities for the LC administration to understand the needs and influences of the USF student population. The peer leaders provide a good deal of informal feedback as it relates to the student experience.

The Learning Center's Assistant Director and Program Assistant are relatively new to the USF community and are therefore still learning the culture and customs of their new environment. Along those lines, the Writing and Speaking Centers, which are co-located with the Learning Center, have experienced changes in leadership within the last academic year. The change in leadership across all three centers have caused a few hiccups, but we have been working through them together.

Aside from transitions in leadership, the Learning Center like all units within USF have experienced budget cuts due to reduced enrollment. The Learning Center leadership is cautious when spending money due to these uncertain times, but this has hindered our ability to update our physical resource library along with the computer stations.

VII. GUIDE FOR THE FUTURE

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

The Learning Center's flexible structure and the abilities of LC staff to accommodate the university's changing needs is one of its key strengths. When the University moved to remote learning in Mid-March 2020, the Learning Center staff were able to quickly transition to online/Zoom support across all programs without a reduction in support or usage. The Learning

Center offers a variety of programs and resources, recognizing that every student shows up differently and we wish to welcome them in a way that's most comfortable for them. And the Learning Center not only focuses on the students using our services, but also the students providing our services. Learning Center peer leaders receive in-depth, rigorous training each semester they work with us. Learning Center peer leaders also gain a new community to belong to.

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

The greatest challenge continues to be campus awareness of the Learning Center. We continue to develop relationships with faculty and promote their involvement in our services. Faculty and our staff have many ideas about how we could expand services to better meet the changing student population's best interests. Unfortunately, rapidly decreasing resources will likely prohibit this. The future looks challenging for the Learning Center.

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

The Learning Center has been through a great deal of change in the past few years. First, the Learning, Writing, and Speaking Centers were all relocated to the first floor of the library. This move allowed the university to reclaim classroom space that we were using temporarily. This physical move impacted how we provide services to students. We have changed some of our administrative procedures for the Learning Center and relegated most administrative oversight functions to the Speaking and Writing Center. The relocation also provided us with a unique opportunity to clarify the Learning Center's role while conducting outreach and marketing campaigns.

We also have significantly streamlined our data management system by moving from TutorTrac to Salesforce. The university has been using Salesforce for the past few years and the LC got in on the ground floor of our data system development process.

Another major change for the Center involved relocating America Reads and other community based tutoring programs to the McCarthy Center. This allowed us to focus our resources on

providing support for our students.

Finally, the Learning Center has expanded our Study Skills Resources. We now have comprehensive resources available online and are serving more students with workshops and one-on-one assistance. A report on usage of these services is included in the appendix.

VIII. PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

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

Some of our plans include expanding Peer-Led-Team Learning and Supplemental Instruction programs. Student needs have increased and faculty have expressed interest in offering additional PLTL and SI sections for more courses. Another goal is to work with faculty in academic departments to provide more consistency of services across academic departments. Efforts to ensure that tutoring is provided fairly and equitably must be on-going.

We will also continue to collaborate with other Student Life and academic departments to provide unique student staff development opportunities. Our plans also include expanding our communication efforts to promote awareness of LC programs and services among faculty and students. In the future we plan to target part-time and new faculty members to make sure they know about our services and establish a newsletter for both faculty and staff.

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

Areas that the Learning Center is preparing to address in the near future include supporting more online learning, promoting and supporting universal design, and diversity, equity and inclusion, expanding awareness of how learning styles differences and learning disabilities affect how students learn, and adapting to extreme differences in the degree to which students come prepared for rigorous college-level academic work. How we will accomplish all this with increasingly limited resources will be a serious challenge.