

# OVERVIEW

## College of Charleston: 2015-2016 CENTER FOR STUDENT LEARNING

### MISSION AND VISION

The mission of the CSL is two-fold: to provide comprehensive academic support programs for College of Charleston students as they strive for excellence in learning, while promoting student leadership and development through peer education experiences. Our vision is to uphold our key values of excellence, commitment, integrity, confidence, and compassion.

### STUDENT IMPACT

CSL defines and measures the impact of services using metrics commonly adopted by learning centers around the country: (a) overall contacts and number of students utilizing CSL services; (b) frequency of use of CSL services; (c) satisfaction with CSL services; (d) comparisons between students using CSL resources and the general student population (for example, retention rates, academic standing, or term GPA); and (d) comparisons between students using CSL resources and specific student populations (for example, entering first-year cohort, classification, or ethnicity).

### CSL CONTACTS

This past year saw a slight decrease in overall students and targeted growth in several programs that saw additional resources pushed their way, such as the new Math Assistance Program (MAP), Accounting Lab, and Study Strategies appointments. 4,495 individual students were seen in core CSL services, which was a small decrease from 4,569 in 2014-2015. This number represents the unduplicated number of students using CSL services. What follows is a duplicated breakdown of student contacts and students served across semesters, services, and courses.

### CSL Contacts

2015-2016

	Contacts/ # Served
Supplemental Instruction	10767 / 1962
Tutoring	14436 / 5156
MAP (Math Assistance Program)	355 / 129
Study Strategies Appointments	992 / 313
Peer Academic Coaching	1077 / 109
Study Strategies Seminars	794 / 667
Cougar Countdown	5695 / NA
<b>Year End Totals</b>	<b>34116 / 8336</b>

The CSL continued its collaborative efforts for outreach such as Accepted Students Weekend, AALANA Preview Day, community events, and local high schools for a total of 10,790 additional contacts.

### CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

This year's challenge will be maintaining a balanced budget while losing two integral staff members, the Data Coordinator and the Director. Searches for both positions are underway and should lead to stability for the future of the CSL.

Opportunities lie in a series of meetings with Deans and Department Chairs to identify further ways to promote students success, such as expanded tutoring with a general studies tutor, Supplemental Instruction coverage for additional courses, and targeted study strategies workshops for selected courses of concern. These strategies are part of the CSL's vision to create collective ownership of student success at the College of Charleston.



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# DEMOGRAPHICS & IMPACT

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## CLASSIFICATION

According to the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, there were 2,237 first-year students in the Fall 2015 cohort. Just under 50% of fall 2015 entering students participated in CSL programs.. Beyond the first year, there is an inverse relationship between class standing and CSL use. As class standing increases, CSL use declines.

## RACE and ETHNICITY

A total of 4,491 individual students utilized CSL services in 2015-2016. Of that number, 10% were African American students. Underrepresented student populations are regularly overrepresented as CSL program participants. This is partly due to partnerships across campus with programs such as MSPS, SPECTRA, and ROAR.

## STUDENT IMPACT: AVERAGE GPA

As seen below, first year students who use CSL services earn higher GPAs than first year students who do not.

### First Year Student GPAs (2015-2016)

	# of Non-CSL First Year Students	Non-CSL First Year Average GPA	# of CSL First Year Students	CSL First Year Average GPA
Fall 2014 semester GPA	1157	2.88	1080	3.06
Spring 2015 semester GPA	1050	2.85	1020	3.10

Additionally, when looking at the impact of multiple visits to the CSL, students who visit 5 or more times during their first year on campus have significantly higher first year GPAs than those who visit only 1-4 times over their first year at the College. This is part of our new marketing push to faculty, staff, parents, and students: *come early, come often.*

### First Year Student GPAs by CSL Attendance

	CSL 1-4 First Year Visits Average GPA	CSL 5-14 First Year Visits Average GPA	CSL 15+ First Year Visits Average GPA
Fall 2014 semester GPA	3.02	3.13	3.18
Spring 2015 semester GPA	3.04	3.17	3.30

## STUDENT IMPACT: RETENTION RATES

Retention data is calculated once the fall census has occurred; thus, data for the Fall 2015 cohort is not yet complete. The Fall 2014 cohort data is complete and promising, especially for African-American CSL users. 73.90% of African-American CSL users were retained while only 55.43% of African-American non CSL users were retained from Fall 2014 to Fall 2015. 76.08% of all CSL users were retained at the College while only 59.36% of non-CSL users were retained. This means that not only do CSL services impact student achievement but they also impact student persistence.



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# SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION

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## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a proven student success program aimed at historically difficult core courses where at least 1/4 to 1/3 of the students in the course either withdraw or receive a grade of "D" or "F" in the course. SI Leaders are students who have taken the course before, successfully completed it, and received a faculty recommendation. They are trained in collaborative learning techniques, attend the course again, model exemplary classroom behavior, and lead three study sessions per week. Currently the CSL supports eleven courses (BIOL 111, BIOL 112, BIOL 201, BIOL 202, CHEM 111, CHEM 112, CHEM 231, CHEM 232, PHIL 120, PSYC 213, DSCI 232, and various HONS sections) with our newest course being Decision Science, which was added in the spring semester. We have covered a total of 74 course sections with SI in the 2015-2016 academic year. Although SI experienced a small decrease in overall session attendance, we saw a 2% increase in DFW reduction rate of SI users over non-users.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

These three student learning outcomes are measured currently:

- 1) The student will use more diverse study strategies than if they had not attended SI.
- 2) The student will perceive the grade benefit of attending SI.
- 3) The student will show increased satisfaction in their course grade than non-attendees.

## STUDENT IMPACT

A duplicated count of students who utilized SI in 2015-2016 is 2,095 for 10,763 visits. Supplemental instruction has several goals including high attendance at sessions, reducing the number of students receiving a grade of D or F, or withdrawing from a course, and a higher mean course grade for attendees.

For 2015-2016 the average SI attendance was 60% of the enrolled students, which is well above the national goal of 40%. There was an overall 15% reduction in the DFW rate of attendees over non-attendees. Additionally, all courses had a higher mean grade for SI attendees than non-attendees with SI attendees earning an average course grade 0.20 points above non-attendees.

Below can be seen the positive effects of regular SI session attendance on graded students, which is a continued strategic marketing goal for our SI program.

Effects of SI Attendance			
Grade	1-4 visits	5-7 visits	8 or + visits
A	231	83	131
B	371	172	138
C	325	110	101
D	119	46	20
W/F	188	35	14
Total: 2084	1234	446	404
<b>Course Grade:</b>	<b>2.50</b>	<b>2.59</b>	<b>2.93</b>

## CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

One of our greatest opportunities this year was adding Decision Science to the list of courses we cover with SI. In addition to serving these new students, this has also opened the door for research into other courses we want to cover in future semesters with SI.

A challenge facing the CSL will be how we will provide adequate support to students in Organic Chemistry due to the decision of the Chemistry department to move Organic Chemistry out of the SI program.

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# TUTORING

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## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The majority of the CSL's tutoring is provided through six labs, most of which have a faculty lab director (Writing Lab, Math Lab, Foreign Languages Tutoring Lab, Accounting Lab, Science Lab, and Speaking Lab). These labs represent a commitment between the departments and the CSL to support students in their academic endeavors. Some labs (Math, Foreign Languages, Science, and Accounting) are course specific whereas other labs (Writing and Speaking) support courses across the curriculum in an effort to boost the communication skills of our students.

Individual tutoring is provided each semester for select courses. These courses are chosen due to their high DFW rate or based on collaboration between departmental faculty and CSL staff.

## STUDENT IMPACT

487 courses were covered by tutoring services this past year for 14,436 visits by 3,218 individual students.

## SATISFACTION

Over 14,500 times students who visited the lab chose to type a comment into TutorTrac about their visit. The overwhelming majority of those comments were positive. Below is a selection of one comment from each lab or service to highlight the kind of customer service satisfaction and academic assistance that the CSL provides to students.

**Accounting Lab:** "Wonderful! She really helped me understand everything in the chapter."

**Foreign Language Lab:** "The worksheets (multiple) were very helpful with my practice of the subjunctive in Spanish. I already knew the rules for it, but it was a nice way to practice what I needed for my Final Exam."

**Individual Tutoring:** "It was helpful to re-work through the problems."

**Math Lab:** "Erin was so helpful and really helped break things down so that I could better understand it!"

**Science Lab:** "Emily did an amazing job helping me develop my scientific paper. Her advice was constructive and insightful."

**Speaking Lab:** "Corey absolutely rocked and understood exactly where I needed more work. He had a good balance of positive comments and critiques. Very pleased with this experience."

**Writing Lab:** "I thoroughly enjoyed my time here. I have never been here before, and Katharina and Jalen helped me with kind service and I now have the tools I need to accomplish the rest of my paper. Thank you so much!"

## CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Overall tutoring numbers were down compared to previous years, which is partly due to the flooding that closed the College in the fall. While the Center doesn't want this trend to continue it did help the Center to keep a balanced budget for the second time in many years. This fine line, between serving students and staying within a tight budget, will continue to be walked by the staff and faculty lab directors of the Center but does provide the Center with two opportunities.

The Writing Lab will bring on an extra tutor for every hour they are open the last week of the semester and the Foreign Language Lab will double-up on Spanish tutors during peak times such as weekday afternoons and Sundays. The budget will need to be vigorously monitored to see if these additions can be supported in the spring as well as the fall.



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# MATH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

MATH 111 (Pre-Calculus) has been a course of concern at the College for many years. Not only has the DFW rate been concerning but students, parents, faculty, and staff have been concerned about this course and students' ability to be successful in the course. Math Assistance Program (MAP) is a hybrid model of SI and group tutoring which has been successful for gateway math courses at other institutions. This model works best when the course sections utilize the same textbook, commonly pace the course, and have a common final exam.

Six times were selected throughout the week that did not conflict with any course offering and were led by a graduate student. The GA answered questions, therefore the sessions weren't lesson-based like SI, but the group worked together for the most part. If students didn't bring questions the GA would question the students to get a narrowed down issues, go through a sample problem, and then find similar problems that the students could work on their own and then work all together.

According to the GA, the students who came liked the bigger chunks of time to work through lots of material and seemed very motivated to do well, even if they were struggling in the course.

## STUDENT IMPACT

During this pilot year 129 students took advantage of the MAP sessions for 359 visits. Of the final exams scores for the course, the students who came to MAP had the highest score.

<b>Math Lab Final Exam Score</b>	57.50
<b>MAP Final Exam Score</b>	70.00
<b>Both Final Exam Score</b>	60.00
<b>Non Final Exam Score</b>	64.50

Additionally, students who came to MAP ended up with a higher course grade than those who came to Math Lab, both MAP and the Math Lab, or neither service.

	<b>Mean Final Course Grade</b>	<b>Participation Rates</b>
<b>Neither</b>	2.25	57%
<b>Math Lab</b>	2.15	25%
<b>MAP</b>	2.76	7%
<b>Both</b>	2.16	11%

A more in-depth study into the types of students who came to MAP will be undertaken next year so as to understand whether MAP is more successful and why, or whether it attracted a more motivated student.

## SATISFACTION

Formal satisfaction surveys were not administered during this pilot year but will be next year, at the end of each semester.

## CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

MAP will be continued in the new academic year. Scheduling and communication about MAP is a challenge, but with a solid partnership in place with Math faculty and the Math Lab Director, this should be easy to overcome. The opportunity for students to be successful in this course, as a result of attending MAP sessions, is promising.



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# STUDY STRATEGIES

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## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Study strategies continues to be an integral part of the Center for Student Learning that offers weekly study skills workshops throughout the semester on various topics, and one-on-one appointments with a member of the professional staff.

There are two levels of scheduled workshops for Study Strategies (101 and 201). The 101 level workshops offer students general learning strategies such as time management, effective study habits, and finals preparation. The 201 level workshops, co-sponsored by the Library, host guest speakers from around campus who focused on higher level skills such as Google Drive and apps.

There are three professional staff members who carry specific case loads of students – graduate school and standardized test preparation (PRAXIS, GRE, LSAT, etc.); dismissed students, students on academic probation, and provisional students; and all other study strategies appointments. The staff members analyze students' study strengths and weaknesses to help brainstorm new study techniques and strategies.

The Center strives to serve the academic support needs of all College of Charleston students; therefore, professional staff members staff an office at the North Campus two days each week. Students who take classes at the North Campus have the opportunity to meet one on one with a staff member to discuss effective study methods as well as identify other available support resources, such as tutoring. The CSL North Campus also serves as additional quiet

study space, fully equipped as a technologically 'smart' classroom.

## STUDENT IMPACT

In the 2015-2016 academic year, we met with 261 different students for a total of 992 study skills appointments. This recovery in numbers was seen because the Center was fully staffed this year.

	<b>Number of Student Contacts</b>	<b>Number of Students Served</b>
<b>2014-2015</b>	635	212
<b>2015-2016</b>	992	261

The Study Strategies Program collaborates with other offices on campus to provide requested workshops such as Greek Life, First Year Experience, Undergraduate Academic Services, New Student Programs, Center for Excellence in Peer Education, Higdon Student Leadership Center, and Athletics. 448 students attended scheduled and requested workshops for a total of 710 contacts.

## CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

After a fall semester with low workshop attendance, a decision was made to temporarily stop the 201 workshop series. In an effort to increase attendance and diversity, we have decided to partner with the Multicultural Student Programs and Services office to host one of our 101 series at their location. Additionally, expanded marketing efforts will be made to increase workshop attendance.



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# PEER ACADEMIC COACHING

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## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Peer Academic Coaching (PAC) program matches trained peer coaches who possess exceptional time and self-management skills with students who are experiencing significant academic difficulty due to a lack of these skills. The PAC-student relationship operates on two levels. Initially, the coach helps the student set a long term goal, and then works with the student to create daily, weekly, and monthly tasks and strategies for reaching that goal. In addition, the coach acts as the student's accountability partner, meeting weekly to support, encourage, and troubleshoot problems.

A unique feature of the PAC program is the flexibility in types of weekly meetings—face to face or by phone, text, or email—which allow the coaches and students to connect on a consistent basis. This is particularly important for students who lack fundamental time management skills, as it allows for ongoing accountability and problem-solving.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- 1) The PAC student will develop effective time and self-management skills.
- 2) The PAC coach will demonstrate the ability to help coached students create and use time and self-management plans during one semester, so that they may effectively self-manage for the remainder of their college career without the need for coaching.

## STUDENT IMPACT

In the 2015-16 academic year, 6 coaches met weekly with 82 students who were at risk of continued academic probation or dismissal. At the end of the academic year, 63% (52 students) were eligible to continue at the College.

	Fall 2015	Spring 2016
<b>Total Coached Students</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Eligible to Return at End of Coached Semester</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>% Eligible to Return</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>54%</b>

## CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

In 2015-16, 100% of coached students were at-risk for continued probation or dismissal--as current probation students, dismissed students returning through the STEP program, or students whose dismissal had been changed to limited probation status due to significant mitigating circumstances. This presents additional challenges for the PAC coaches: while these students appreciate the urgent need to improve dramatically in one semester, they still struggle with creating and maintaining good habits and strategies for effective time and self-management. One PAC coach succinctly summarized the challenge: "I can help students get organized and motivated, but I need to figure out how to keep them organized and motivated!" The PAC program coordinator will address this and other issues through additional, targeted training activities and exercises.

The PAC program will continue to develop and adapt based on the needs of coached students, and will continue to align with those offices that work closely with students who are struggling to regain or attain academic good standing.

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# COUGAR COUNTDOWN

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## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Cougar Countdown is a series of events and activities designed to relieve stress and provide healthy, energizing study breaks for students during Exam Week. Cougar Countdown activities are sponsored by many different offices and departments on campus, as well as a number of community partners. All events are free to students.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- 1) Students will experience the benefits of balancing their study time with healthy study breaks.
- 2) On and off-campus partners will recognize the value of Cougar Countdown to students and the entire College community.

A survey will be implemented in Spring 2017 to assess these learning outcomes.

## STUDENT IMPACT

During the 2015-16 academic year, Cougar Countdown hosted 54 events which were attended by 5,769 students. Students eagerly anticipate the kick-off each semester, and see Cougar Countdown as a positive part of an otherwise stressful week.

In fall 2015, the Health and Stress Relief Fair was incorporated into the popular 'Puppies on the Green' event. This also allowed for greater involvement and engagement with community partners such as Roper, MUSC, an art therapist, and a chiropractor. This collaboration was so popular that the same model was utilized in the spring semester, with the assistance and leadership of the office of Counseling and Substance Abuse Services.

Events/Total #	Fall 15	Spring 16
Yoga	45	50
Massage	25	25
Zumba	109	21
Pancake Breakfast	450	n/a
Pets for Less Stress/Health Fair	500	250
Cougar Cookout	350	600
Chill on the Green	n/a	600
Coffee/Green	450	700
Ask a Prof	n/a	35
Card Making	75	130
Persimmon Café Study Break	200	200
Extended Tutoring	167	129
Study Breaks	160	248
<b>Total Attendance:</b>	<b>2631</b>	<b>3138</b>

## CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

The challenges for the planning team are to seek and plan events that are attractive to students and consistently upgrade publicity and marketing strategies. The planning team will continue to use all forms of social media to inform students and gather relevant data and an annual survey will be conducted to elicit feedback on current and potential events.

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