

L.A.C. News

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

FALL 2001

Our Tutors

The LAC Tutoring Team for 2001-2002 includes:

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Ray Decanio
Miranda DeJarnette
Angela DiCarlo
Beth Dickman
Caroline Eady
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Brady Hall
Katie Heisel
Stacy Hoehn
Shaka James
Kristina Jiner,
 Head of Study Groups
Laura McNeer
Nazli Mohyuddin
Chris Penna
Eric Peter, Head Tutor
Kasey Rohling
Vita Saranga
Laura Schmidt
Carolyn Schork
Harry Seibel
Ale Straud
Kelli Tasset
Joe Tyna, Head

Study Group and Study Table Program

The LAC added several new Study Tables and Study Groups to last year's already numerous line-up.

So just what is a Study Group? "Groups are designed to be community learning environments in which students help each other with difficult course material," said Marie Gasper, LAC Assistant Director. Students sign up for the appropriate groups at the LAC or online at the LAC's website. These students are expected to attend the group's sessions *every week*, in order to best facilitate the development of the community.

This group learning tool seems to be working for many students; almost 50 of them have joined the various groups so far. And many professors are also pleased with their participation. "I've seen an improvement in the students' work, since they've been going to the study group," says Dr. Michelle Brady, the

professor of two Philosophy 100 courses with study groups. "Not only can they follow what's going on in the

"Groups are designed to be community learning environments in which students help each other with course material."

text, but they also feel they can participate in class more."

In addition to the General Chemistry and General Biology Study Groups which have been run the past two years, groups have been started this year for:

- * College Physics
- * Organic Chemistry
- * Ethics (PHIL 100)
- * Elementary Functions

The structure of the groups this year has been slightly changed. Groups are now specifically tailored towards each individual professor. Therefore, there are three General Biology groups, one for each professor teaching the course. The Ethics group and the Elementary Functions group have been specifically designed in cooperation with Dr. Brady,

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New Faces at the LAC

Over the summer of 2001, the Learning Assistance Center experienced multiple important changes in personnel and the office itself.

In May the Department of Education awarded a TRIO/ Student Support Services grant to Xavier. This program will support low-income and first-generation students, and students with disabilities.

In June, the director of Learning Assistance, Sarah Kelly, was promoted as the Assistant Vice President for Student Development.

With the grant and this promotion came some new faces to the office. Ms. Karen Lyons began in June as Ms. Kelly's secretary and secretary for Learning Assistance. Also, in September, Ms. Katherine Grant, SSS director, and, in August, Sr. Myra James Bradley, SSS campus minister, moved into the new SSS office, which is now temporarily sharing office space with the LAC.

We want to welcome Ms. Lyons, Ms. Grant, and Sr. Bradley to the LAC family, and invite others to stop by

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Study Skills HELP!!!

Do you know some students who could use a refresher or two on study skills? The LAC is here to help! Xavier students can take advantage of several different LAC services to help improve their study skills:

Study Skills Brochures:

Several brief pamphlets with quick tips and activities on topics including Time Management, Reading Skills, and Study Skills in general.

LAC Study Skills WEBSITE:

http://www.xu.edu/lac/study_skills.htm

Tips, activities, and links (because Study Skills are ALL interconnected!) to help students learn better studying habits. Pages include tips on: Note Taking, How to Stay Awake in Class, Learning Styles (including a Learning Style Inventory), Specific Test Taking Tips, and Reading Strategies. This site is continually being developed, so check back often for more information

LAC Tutors:

LAC Tutors are trained to help students not only with course content, but also with more fundamental study skills issues. Students can sign up to work one-on-one with a Peer Tutor to help improve their study habits. Freshmen living in the Residence Halls also can take advantage of the Peer Advisors, who can also help them with study skills.

And the best news is: It's all FREE! All these LAC services—and more—are free of charge to Xavier students. So the next time you think someone could use some improvement in their study skills, tell them

Study Groups and Tables Expand

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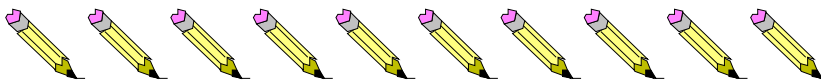
and Dr. Danny Otero, Math and Computer Science.

The Study Table program has also expanded. Tables are designed to be drop-in tutoring environments, similar to the Math Lab (although with much more limited hours!). In addition to the Economics, A&P, and Music Theory Tables, which have been run for several years, four new tables have been started:

- * Statistics
- * Spanish 101-202
- * Spanish Conversation
- * Vertebrate Physiology

Greater demand for one-on-one tutoring, and requests from individual departments and professors have led Kristina Jiner, the Head of Study Groups and Tables, and the LAC to organize these new tables. Please see the chart below for times and locations of each of the

| Fall 2001 LAC Study Tables | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Subject | Day(s) | Time | Location |
| A&P | Tuesdays | 5-7 PM | Alter 202 |
| Economics | Tuesdays | 5-7 PM | Alter 301 |
| Music Theory | Mondays Thursdays | 5-7 PM 6:30-7:30 PM | Edgecliff 204 or 103 |
| Spanish 101-202 | Wednesdays and Fridays | 1:30-2:30 PM | Husman Rec. Room |
| Spanish Conversation | Mondays | 3-5 PM | Alter 314 |
| Statistics | Tuesdays and Wednesdays | 3-5 PM | Alter 321 |
| Vert. Phys. | Wednesdays | 9-10 PM | Alter 301 |

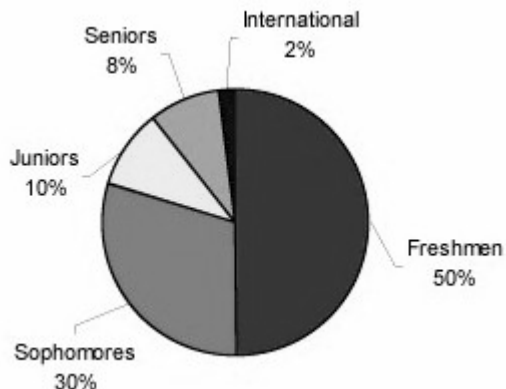


Does Tutoring really work?

According to our statistics from last year, YES! 117 students signed up for tutors last spring, for a total of 147 tutor requests (many people signed up for more than one class). Of these 147 requests, over 108 received tutoring in the requested subject. And the students who were tutored more tended to do better in their classes. Students who were tutored 6 to 8.75 hours received an average grade of 2.71, (meaning more of them got B's than C's), while students who were tutored from .5 to 2.75 hours only received a 2.04, or a C.

As always, tutoring is a free service available to all Xavier students. For a list of some of the courses tutored, or for signing up for a tutor, see the LAC website: www.xu.edu/lac.

Who uses our Tutoring Services?



Newly Hired Tutors

The LAC had one of its most productive rounds of student employee hiring ever last Spring. Thirty-five completed applications were received, and eighteen new Peer Tutors were hired. Of these, nine were also selected to serve on this year's team of Peer Advisors.

In March, applications were sent out to professors in many of the disciplines where new tutors would be needed for the coming year, to students, and to directors of other Xavier programs. Advertisements went up all over campus and in the *News wire*, and applications were

available to in the LAC office and to download off the LAC website.

Applications were reviewed following the March 30 deadline, and interviews were held April 5-10. There were some very difficult decisions to be made about who would become a member of the Peer Advisor and Peer Tutor teams. Only half of the applicants were eventually hired, and less than 50% of the applicants were offered PA positions.

The majority of the applications came from current Freshmen (now sophomores), and most of the rest were current Sophomores. With the addition of four new

Peer Advising Update

Once again, the Learning Assistance Center is collaborating with the Office of Residence Life to bring tutors to the Freshman Residence Hall Floors this year. Twelve Peer Advisors began training in August, over a week before classes began. Training included a day at a low-ropes course, workshops on common Peer Advising issues, a morning working with their Resident Assistants, activities with Manresa, half a day preparing Programming, and the annual Freshman Move-In.

Since training the PA's have been doing a fantastic job—helping students on their floors with everything from Calculus to making a weekly schedule. They have already done a “passive program”, presenting information on various study skills in a readable format, and they are currently working with their RA's to present the First Year Experience (FYE) Academics workshops.

Lori Lambert, Associate Director of Residence Life, notes, “PAs have been attending more RA community builders, programs and even teambuilders this year. I think this is beneficial for all involved and hopefully it makes it easier for residents to ask for academic assistance from their PA. I know the RAs appreciate the PAs attending the



Ask the Director ... Answers to Some Faculty LD FAQ

-Sarah Kelly, LAC Director and AVP for Student Development

Question: “I referred a student for disability testing and he said that he wasn't going to be tested. What happened?”

Answer: We are pleased that you referred a student who was having difficulties. The LAC, in coordination with the Psychological Services Center, offers disability testing on a limited basis. It is offered as part of the training for the Psy.D. students. Under the supervision of Dr. David Hellkamp, Psy.D. students gain valuable experience testing individuals for learning disabilities. Since this is a teaching situation it takes a great deal of time. As the director of the LAC, I screen students for referral. Oftentimes during the screening interview I uncover poor study habits, poor time management, roommate or

boyfriend/girlfriend conflicts, or emotional issues. While these situations certainly have the potential to interfere with coursework, they are not in-and-of-themselves indicative of a learning disability. I may suggest that the student work with a tutor to learn effective study and time-management techniques. Or I may refer them to the Health and Counseling Center to talk things over with a counselor. On average, I refer approximately 30% of the students I see for testing. When referring a student to the LAC for academic difficulties, it is helpful to our staff if faculty members simply refer the student without the expectation that testing will be done.

Question: “It's almost Thanksgiving and I just received a letter about a student with a disability from you. Why so late?”

Answer: Unfortunately, some students adopt a “wait and see” approach in their classes. They wait to gauge how things are going before they decide to disclose a disability to their professors. Some students wait until they are in academic trouble before disclosing. I always counsel students against this approach, but cannot go against their wishes. I gently remind students who have not requested accommodations by the middle of September and again after midterms. Students must sign a release form each semester enabling me to write letters to their professors. When a student comes in with an “eleventh hour” request, I explain to them that accommodations are never retroactive. As a disability service provider, I consistently counsel students to disclose early. That way, it is a proactive request for services, not a reactive explanation for poor

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Be Sure to Visit our Website!!!
www.xu.edu/lac

L.A.C. NEWS

Congratulations to our Graduates!

The LAC graduated 16 of its tutors at last spring's commencement in Cintas. Where are they now? Eight of them were accepted into acclaimed advanced degree programs, five directly into doctoral programs. Others are performing service and helping others in their new careers. We're very proud of them, and impressed at their achievements!

Disability Information

Did you know that the LAC has several pamphlets dealing with understanding disabilities? Pamphlets are free to anyone interested, and include:

- * The Americans with Disabilities Act
- * Being Sensitive to People with Disabilities
- * People with Disabilities
- * So, Your Roommate Has a Disability: Dispelling Myths about People with Disabilities

What is....

Tourette's Syndrome?

Gilles de Tourette's Syndrome is a rare but disruptive condition. It involves multiple tics (small, repetitive muscle movements), usually facial tics with grimacing and blinking. Tics may also occur in the shoulders and arms. This is usually accompanied by loud vocalizations, which may include grunts or noises, or uncontrollable (compulsive) use of obscenities or short phrases. The tics are worse during emotional stress and are absent during sleep. The cause is unknown. It occurs most often in boys, and may begin around age 7 or 8 or not until the child is in his or her late teens or early twenties. It may, at times, run in families. The condition is generally benign but may be disruptive to the point of severely affecting social interaction. There is no effect on life span. Tourette's Syndrome can be effectively managed

The LAC library also has many books and videos about learning disabilities and AD(HD), and disabilities in general.