Fall 2010

ASC Newsletter

Academic Success Center, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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Message from the Dean

“Expect Success” That’s our motto as we serve thousands of students who come into the ASC for free tutoring, to explore majors, be advised on course selection, and/or meet with an academic success coach. We opened our doors in September 2008, and a lot has happened in two years! In partnership with the Libraries, we have opened a tutoring area on the second floor of the Lied Library. Hundreds of students have met with our academic advisors and gone from exploring majors to declaring majors. We’re very proud to say that our student-athletes have excelled not only in their sports, but also in their academic pursuits.

“Expect Success” has been applied to a new arena of services to our students: academic success coaching. Our coaches partner with undergraduate students to actively engage in on-going support through coaching on study skills, time management, tutoring referrals, and links to a range of campus services. Hundreds of students are meeting with specially-trained graduate assistants from a wide-range of colleges to ensure that our students have optimal support and earn their degrees at UNLV.

Look for our support of Distance Education students with the Academic Success Center online at academicsuccess.unlv.edu. In partnership with Distance Education, our services will extend to all D.E. students and include coaching, advising, and tutoring. “Expect Success” and expect the Academic Success Center to continue to offer every means of academic support and referrals available to help our students earn their degrees at UNLV!

Ann McDonough

Faculty Spotlight

The Academic Success Center highlights the work of Dr. Tim Gauthier, Director of the Interdisciplinary Degree Programs in the College of Liberal Arts. Dr. Gauthier earned his Ph.D. in English Literature from UNLV in 2003 and served as Associate Dean of the University College from 2005 to 2008. Professor Gauthier’s teaching has ranged from traditional literary topics to contemporary American culture, as well as the supervision of interdisciplinary capstone projects and internships. Dr. Gauthier has worked closely with the ASC in continuing to develop a First-Year Experience course — IDS 100. He recently published an article in The Journal of Postcolonial Writing entitled, “9/11, Image Control, and the Graphic Narrative: Spiegelman, Rehr, Torres.” He is currently at work on an upcoming book centered on literary representations and responses to 9/11 both at home and abroad.
Testing Center Officially Opens!

The long-awaited Testing Center has officially opened in the Academic Success Center. Although testing services have always been a function of the Center, to have dedicated space, equipment and personnel to run the Center is a big step forward. The Testing Center is located in the ASC room 146 and currently has 14 desktop computers (with plans to add six more for a total of 20) and additional seating for up to 16 students needing to take paper-based tests. Future plans for the Center include becoming a certified test site for the Iso-Quality tests, as well as installing cameras in the testing room to assist with test security.

Tests currently offered include:

- ACT Residual test
- CLEP tests
- iCritical Thinking test (in collaboration with the UNLV Lied Library)
- Accuplacer, TEAS & COMPASS
- Kryterion
- Proctoring services for distance education and correspondence tests
- UNLV class make-up exams (with instructor approval)
- National test site for the SAT, ACT, LSAT, and MPRE

For more information about testing, please visit our website at: academicsuccess.unlv.edu/advising/testing.html, or contact Paula Castillo, Testing Manager, at (702) 895-0667.

ASC Academic Advising

The Academic Success Center welcomed and advised 970 newly-admitted exploring majors to UNLV this Fall 2010 semester. Students attended one of 15 Student Orientation, Advising and Registration (SOAR) sessions or they were advised by phone, e-mail, or individual appointments. The ASC advising staff are currently contacting students by phone to check on their progress and to ascertain how we can help with their future success.

“Do not go where the path may lead; go where there is no path and leave a trail.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson
Tutoring Takes Flight at the ASC

The Academic Success Center’s free campus-wide tutoring program was launched Monday, August 30th and started with a bang. Within the first week, 116 students took advantage of the free tutoring services provided Sunday through Friday on the second floor of the Lied Library.

Over 2,500 tutoring sessions were conducted during the Spring 2010 semester. To accommodate the needs for this semester, we have hired additional staff and extended our hours of operation. In addition to the drop-in tutoring lab, the Academic Success Center is now offering Modified Supplemental Instruction (MSI) for various courses. This program provides voluntary, peer-facilitated study sessions led by a student-tutor who attends class, actively engages in the learning process, and then leads a 60-minute study session two times per week. This program strives to help students improve their understanding of the material through content review of the course material. Study sessions are open to all students enrolled in the course. Tutors work very closely with the faculty to ensure the success of the students. Tutors make in-class announcements to inform students of this service that supports their in-class learning.

Faculty interested in participating in this program are welcome to contact us at 702-774-4623 to learn more about incorporating MSI into the classroom. Additional information about campus-wide tutoring and modified supplemental instruction is available on the web at http://academicsuccess.unlv.edu/tutoring.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”
Margaret Mead

Making a Difference Through the Rebel Reading Challenge!

Student-Athlete Academic Services (SAAS), with support from Cash America Super Pawn and Spread The Word Nevada, coordinated the Rebel Reading Challenge on September 16-17 and 23-24. This initiative was the second consecutive semester for this reading contest, which challenged third, fourth, and fifth graders from eight local elementary schools to read as many books as possible within a 30-day period.

Sixteen UNLV student-athletes from a variety of sports held assemblies at each elementary school to promote the reading contest. The winning school at the end of this challenge will receive a lunch party hosted by the student-athletes who visited that school. Also in attendance for the party were Hey Reb and Chet Buchanan from the 98.5 FM Morning Zoo radio show. Each student from the winning school will also receive two free tickets to the UNLV home football game against Wyoming on November 13.

The winning school for the Spring 2010 Rebel Reading Challenge was Miss Jennifer Stuber’s fourth-grade class at Jay Jeffers Elementary School. Miss Stuber’s class read a total of 41,063 pages, and student Amalia Ruffino read 2,460 pages to achieve the highest individual total. All students received two free tickets to the UNLV Men’s Basketball game versus Wyoming. The class was sponsored by Beau Orth and Doug Zismann from the UNLV football team and Lexie Bravo from Track/Cross Country.
Awards and Announcements

Congratulations to Cheryl Tillotson (on the right) who has been selected as a 2010 National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) Outstanding Advising Certificate of Merit recipient in the Academic Advising—Primary Role category. She was honored at the Annual Awards Program on October 3rd during the NACADA Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida. These awards recognize people who are making significant contributions to the field of academic advising. Cheryl has also been selected as the Academic Success Center recipient for the 2010 Academic Advising Professional Development Award through the UNLV Provost’s Office. She joins 10 other academic advising professionals from amongst the other colleges in this award selection.

Congratulations to Monica McNeely, Administrative Assistant III (above photo—left), who was the recipient of the September 2010 Classified Employee of the Month Award! Monica was chosen for this award for her outstanding contributions and for going above and beyond her normal duties. Monica has been a dedicated Classified Staff member for over 9 years.

Adult Learner Concierge

As an Academic Advisor with the Academic Success Center, in addition to the work I do with students who are exploring majors at UNLV, I also have the responsibility for being the Adult Learner Concierge for the Center. In this position, I speak with both prospective students and admitted UNLV students who are returning to college after a number of years to finish their education. These students may be returning to UNLV and looking to select a different degree from which they were originally enrolled; they may be new to UNLV and bringing with them credits from other universities, which may or may not apply to their chosen degree; they may be taking classes at UNLV through the university’s 62+ Plus Program as a non-degree seeking student, and will later choose to enter a program of study toward a bachelor’s degree.

In my work with the population of Adult Learners, I have been afforded opportunities to travel nationally representing UNLV as a presenter and as a member of state-wide panel discussions on working with this population. These collaborations are supported by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) [http://www.wiche.edu/].

In August, Dr. Elizabeth Baldizan, Executive Director for Community2Campus, UNLV Division of Educational Outreach, and I served on a Nevada state-wide panel to discuss lessons learned and challenges faced through the use of this Concierge model. The meeting was held at Truckee Meadows Community College in Reno, NV. I also attended the WICHE Non-traditional No More State Leader Meeting 2010 in September held in Denver, CO, to continue the discussion on outreach, policy, and best practices for the Adult Learner population.

Salvador Mora
Academic Advisor