

2018–2019 Annual Report

Learning Assistance  
and Resource Center

West Chester University of Pennsylvania



**Learning Assistance and Resource Center**  
**224 Lawrence Center**  
**610-436-2535**  
**[larc@wcupa.edu](mailto:larc@wcupa.edu)**  
**[www.wcupa.edu/larc](http://www.wcupa.edu/larc)**

# Table of Contents

## Overview

4

## Services

5

General Tutoring

6

Supplemental Instruction (SI)

8

Early Alert Program

11

Academic Success Workshops (ASW)

15

SmarThinking

16

Tutor Training

17

## Testimonials

18

Tutor Testimonials

18

Student Testimonials

19

## Partnerships

20

Academic Development Program (ADP)

21

Achieve!

22

Athletic Mentoring Program (AMP)

23

## **Mission**

The Learning Assistance and Resource Center (LARC) strives to provide quality academic support services which help students become independent, active learners who achieve academic success. The LARC aims to promote cognitive development in a diversity of student populations through assessing and teaching the effective skills necessary for achieving academic and personal learning goals.

## **Vision**

The pursuit of a quality education, although contingent upon professors and administrators, is essentially a venture of self-reliance. At the Learning Assistance and Resource Center, we envision a University populated with independent learners imbued with a desire to learn, to improve, and to progress. Our tutors promote the critical thinking skills necessary for students to find unique and creative solutions to achieve academic success and actively pursue career goals.

## **Outcomes**

- Increase services to students proportional to the university's enrollment growth in first and second-year students
- Continue to be certified to help students become independent learners through facilitated peer-interactions
- Tutored students will effectively apply learning strategies and achieve increased academic performance and retention
- Peer student tutors will participate in professional development opportunities

# Services

## GENERAL TUTORING

The LARC's General Tutoring is purposed to help students recognize their learning styles and develop the skills needed to become independent learners.

## ACADEMIC SUCCESS WORKSHOPS

The Academic Success Workshop (ASW) is a program designed to teach students general study skills, class participation, and time management methods which are applicable to all courses and programs of study.

## SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION

The Supplemental Instruction (SI) model of student academic assistance helps students in historically difficult classes master course content while they develop and integrate learning and study strategies

## SMARTHINKING

The addition of Smarthinking to the services currently offered by the LARC will allow students the opportunity to access free online tutoring 24/7 in the comfort and convenience of any space where internet access is available.

## EARLY ALERT PROGRAM

The Early Alert Program is a proactive system of communication and collaboration of professors, program staff, academic advisors, and University students

## TUTOR TRAINING

The LARC provides training for tutors to the standards of the College Reading & Learning Association (CRLA) and allows tutors to become CRLA Level I, II and II certified.

# General Tutoring

Registration for Chemistry and Biology begins the Wednesday of every semester at 7:30 a.m. Registration for all other courses begin the Thursday of every semester at 7:30 a.m.

**Students may register throughout the semester until the 12th week.**

Students must come to Lawrence Center to register in person for tutoring. We do not offer tutor registration over the phone or online. In person registration allows the LARC to verify student schedules, tutor availability and provide additional referrals to other useful campus resources.

[Click Here for Courses](#)

# Tutor Profiles

The LARC offers tutoring in most 100- and 200-level general education requirement courses.

## Qualifications - Peer Tutors:

- Undergraduate/Graduate Student
- Be admitted or enrolled in a degree program at WCU.
- Have passed with a grade of A- or better in any course he/she intends to tutor.
- Undergraduate - minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA; Graduate - minimum 3.25 cumulative GPA
- Experience in tutoring, teaching, or conducting study groups preferred.
- Two professor references (one must be in the requested subject).



**3.78 GPA**

The average cumulative grade point average for LARC tutors



**105-120**

The number of tutors employed and trained at the LARC each semester for a variety of subject areas



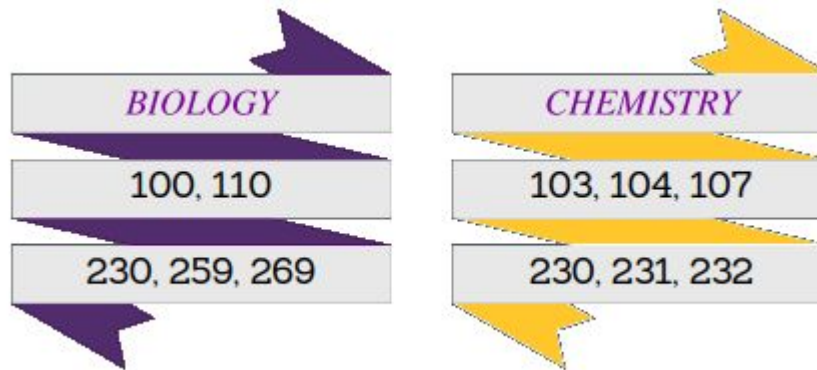
**1,176** students were registered for tutoring as of April 9, 2019

# Supplemental Instruction

The Supplemental Instruction (SI) model of student academic assistance helps students in historically difficult classes master course content while they develop and integrate learning and study strategies. The LARC currently employ 45 SI Leaders who sit in the high risk Biology and Chemistry courses. The success of the SI program suggests SI has a positive impact on student retention. By continuing and expanding the current SI program, we hope to maintain improvement of the academic achievement of students at risk of poor performance (D, F, or W) in the high-risk courses.



**Courses currently offered under SI**



Our highly qualified and trained student leaders have previously earned an A or A- in the course they are assigned to tutor, have above a 3.0 CGPA, and received two faculty recommendation letters. Also, SI Leaders attend class with the students to serve as a model student in all capacities. SI is a completely free service to students, and it is expected students attend their assigned weekly session in addition to attending class.



# Supplemental Instruction & Review Sessions

## Review Session Pilot Program

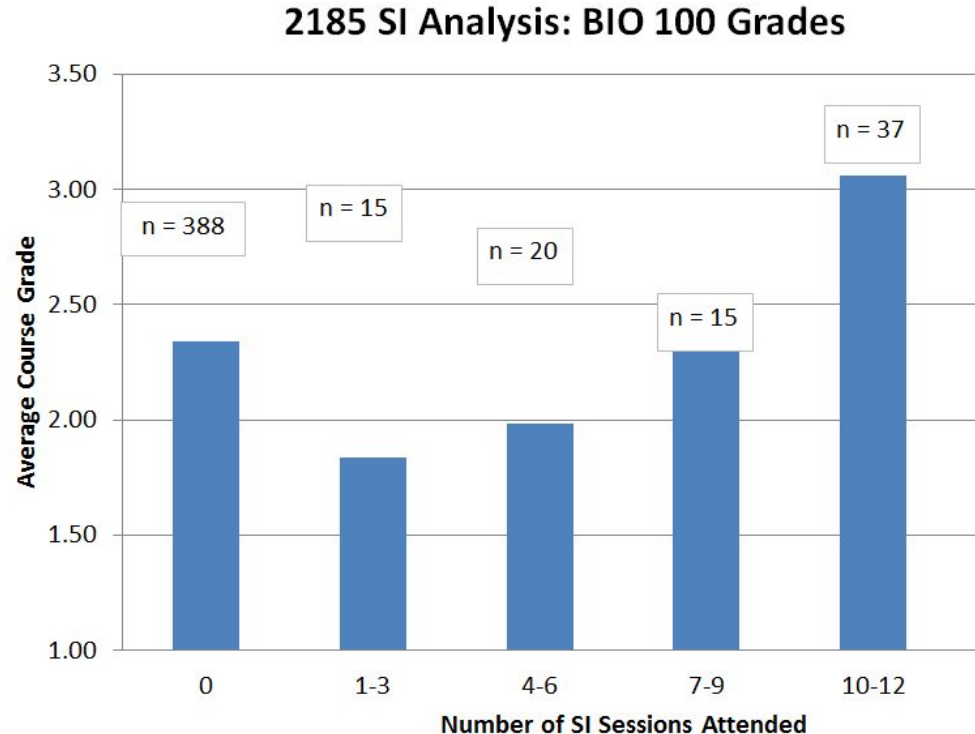
- All biology and chemistry tutors conducted review sessions for their subjects prior to exam dates for the courses they tutor and attend class for
- Review session date and times were set by the tutor
- The Assistant Director of the LARC reserved classroom space, sent out RSVPs to the classes, and confirmed time/date with the tutor(s)
- These review sessions are two-hours long and student led (meaning students come with questions prepared to ask the tutors to review)
- These review sessions are open to all students in the course, not just students enrolled in tutoring

*There is no data on the success of this program yet as the first semester implemented was Spring 2019*

# Supplemental Instruction Success

The success of the SI program is captured in these promising statistics. For example, students who attended more than 9 tutoring sessions in BIO 100 did not receive below a C grade.

The success of this program can be partly attributed to the fact that SI tutors attend class. This allows them to speak with the professors to better understand how to present material to students and they are able to narrow down on what areas students should focus on.



# Early Alert Program

The Early Alert Program is a proactive system of communication and collaboration of professors, program staff, academic advisors, and University students.

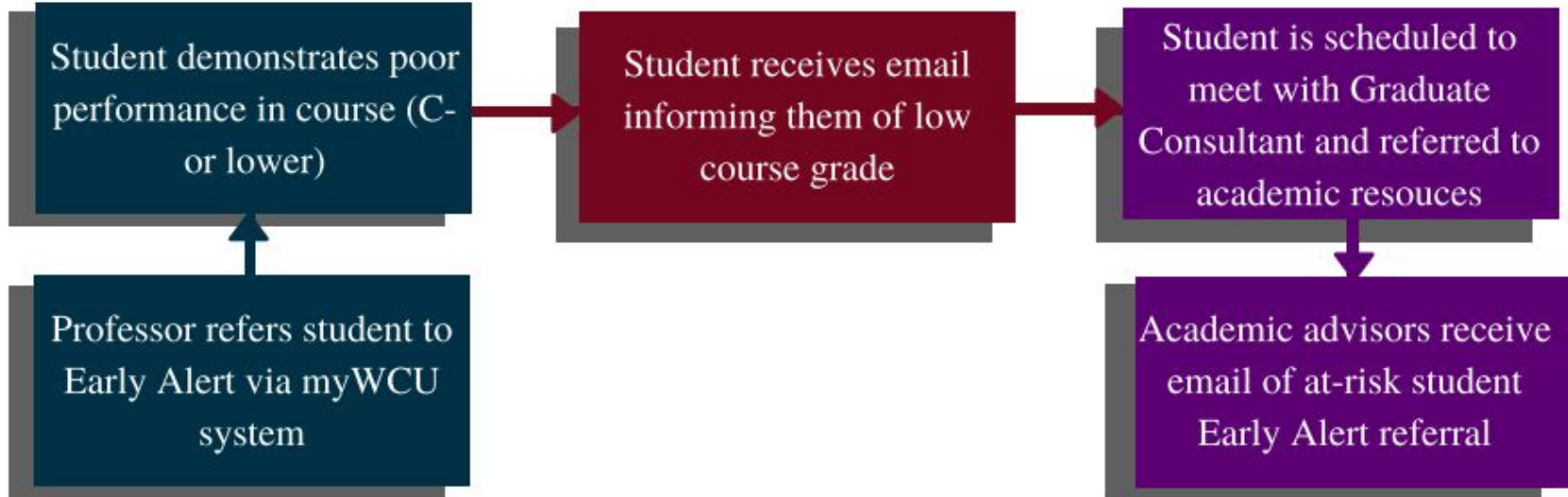


## Mission Statement

The mission of the Early Alert Program (EAP) is to provide early intervention through early indicators to students identified through multiple collegiate channels as needing additional academic and social support. The program works by identifying students, contacting them, and scheduling regular meetings to allow them to achieve their academic goals, as well as improve the retention and graduation rates at West Chester University.

# Early Alert Program

Students with a grade of C- or lower are identified by the professor and referred. Once students are referred, an email letter is automatically generated to the students informing them of their low grades for the designated course(s) and introducing them to program services. An email is sent to the EAP Coordinator, who schedules a time for alerted students to meet Graduate Consultants. An email is generated to the students' advisors informing them of their assigned students who are in academic jeopardy. Only staff and faculty who have access to grade reports have access to EA grades.



# Early Alert Program - Impact on Continued Probation Students

Data was collected from Continued Probation students from the Fall 2018 semester. Of the 118 students on Continued Probation, 96 were advised to utilize the Early Alert Program's services as part of their academic recovery plan. While all students were offered these services, only 40 chose to utilize them, creating an experimental group (n=40) and a control group (n=44).

	GPA Before	GPA After	Change
CP Students - Did Not Use EA (Control)	1.66	1.75	0.09
CP Students - Used EA (Experimental)	1.72	2.08	0.36

Source courtesy of Graduate Assistants Alyssa Saputelli and Amy Gallagher



# Early Alert Student Testimonials

“She was very helpful throughout the semester, making me stay on top of my assignments.”

“He has been amazing in helping me to get back on track with my academic career!”

“He is very helpful and I’m glad I have him as Mentor.”

“All my concerns were addressed to its fullest potential.”

“Pointed me in the right direction. Very helpful and gave me great resources.”

“I have been doing great this semester and I feel very confident in my ability to get off of probation this semester and that is in part due to my meetings here.”

“He has been an amazing resource for me this semester. He has been very supportive in helping me accomplish my goals.”

“She is awesome in helping me to achieve my academic goals for this semester.”

“This was very helpful and helped me to put things in perspective for the remainder of the semester.”

“These sessions have been a huge help in getting me back on course with my college career.”

“Overall these meeting have been very helpful and allowed me to reflect over what I have been doing, as opposed to previous semesters. I have also learned about some valuable resources on campus that have helped me improve throughout the semester.”

# Academic Success Workshops

**863** attendances were recorded for Academic Success Workshops in the 2018-2019 academic year



In Fall 2018,

**98%**

of students agree or strongly agree that ASW sessions positively impacted their academic development

The Academic Success Workshop (ASW) is a program designed to teach students general study skills, class participation, and time management methods which are applicable to all courses and programs of study. It consists of four one-hour workshops facilitated by experienced graduate students at various times over the course of four weeks.





Smarthinking "strives to assist students in developing successful learning and problem-solving strategies that will help them succeed in the classroom." The addition of Smarthinking to the services currently offered by the LARC will allow students the opportunity to access free online tutoring 24/7 in the comfort and convenience of any space where internet access is available.

For the Fall 2018 semester, **554 students were registered** for SmarThinking and **126.78 hours were logged over 263 sessions**. For the Spring 2019 semester, there were **73 new registrations** and **84.95 hours were logged over 195 sessions**.

2018-2019  
627 students registered  
211.7 hours logged  
458 sessions



# Tutor Training

The LARC provides training for tutors to the standards of the College Reading & Learning Association (CRLA). All tutors are Level I Certified. Level II and III Certification are optional.

## Sample of Topics Covered:

### Level I: Certified Tutor

- Basic Tutoring Guidelines/ Tutoring Do's & Don'ts
- Techniques for beginning and ending a tutoring session
- Handling Difficult Situations
- Communication Skills

### Level II: Advanced Certified Tutor

- Use of Probing Questions
- Cultural Awareness/Intercultural Communications
- Diversity
- Special Needs Students
- Identifying and Using Resources
- Tutoring in Specific Skills or Subject Areas

### Level III: Master Certified Tutor

- Self-regulated Learning, Brain Learning, and Memory
- The Role of Learning Centers in Higher Education
- Training and Supervising Other Tutors
- Group Management Skills



# Tutor Testimonials

“What the LARC means to me: A community of people that cares about its own and extends that care to others.”

“The LARC has taught me skills that can be used throughout my entire life. Tutoring has taught me how to adapt to others learning styles that are different than my own. The LARC has provided growth in multiple areas of my life that will make me a more aware and confident person.”



“Being a tutor at the LARC has meant a lot to me because as an Education major, it can be really easy to doubt myself and my ability to teach concepts to students in an effective manner. Tutoring has helped with my self-confidence because I know I have the ability to help students learn, and I can make a difference in their education.”

“Being a tutor at the LARC has allowed me to become more confident in my ability to convey my understanding of complex topics. This has translated into my personal life as well. The LARC has given me the confidence to share my opinion and knowledge proudly.”

“Being a tutor has allowed me to grow as a leader, through facilitating sessions, organization and responsibility, and finding the appropriate times to step back and let the tutees’ skills shine.”



# Student Testimonials



“She was always ready to answer a question and genuinely cared about helping me make sure I was okay with the subject.”



“I think they do a terrific job with helping students achieve their goals.”

“He was exemplary. He went out of his way to help us however he could, even scheduling other sessions based on our needs.”

“Very knowledgeable and makes difficult concepts easier to understand.”



“Great at teaching others how to learn and great at listening and answering questions.”

“She made a huge difference to me. She helped me out outside of tutoring times and went above and beyond to keep me on track for this class. She did more than just teach concepts, she taught them well and helped me pinpoint various other weaknesses. She knows exactly how to teach concepts in a simple easy way to understand.”



# Partnerships

## Academic Development Program (ADP)

The Academic Development Program is a special admissions program for students who do not meet current admissions criteria but who still show the potential to succeed in college.

## Achieve!

Achieve! strives to provide additional resources to promote the success of 1<sup>st</sup> year students at the University. We aim to expand students' ability to perform academically, develop meaningful connections, and cultivate self-awareness and advocacy skills during their time at the University.

## Athletic Mentoring Program (AMP)

The Mentoring Program provides a variety of services specifically designed for student-athletes who may be at-risk academically, or are deemed to be in need of services to help to navigate academics at the college level.

# Academic Development Program

The Academic Development Program is a special admissions program for students who do not meet current admissions criteria but who still show the potential to succeed in college. Students admitted to the program complete a five week summer session to assist them in developing academic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. In addition, the program provides academic support through academic advising, tutoring, mentoring and academic monitoring, and counseling. Students who successfully complete the summer session enter the fall semester with increased academic confidence and familiarity with the campus culture and university procedures.



## Act 101

West Chester University provides a comprehensive Act 101 Program. ADP students who qualify for Act 101 receive additional services such as financial assistance for the summer session, access to specialized cultural activities, additional tutoring, and other services.

## Peer Assistants

Chi Alpha Epsilon was formed to recognize the academic achievements of students admitted to colleges and the universities through non-traditional criteria. Its purposes are to promote continued high academic standards, to foster increased communication among its members, and to honor academic excellence achieved by those students.

## Chi Alpha Epsilon

Chi Alpha Epsilon was formed to recognize the academic achievements of students admitted to colleges and the universities through non-traditional criteria. Its purposes are to promote continued high academic standards, to foster increased communication among its members, and to honor academic excellence achieved by those students.



“I was very confused with what to do before I came and now I am very confident and I have great advice.”

# Achieve!



“My session was amazing, I received clarity on some personal and academic dilemmas I was facing. I am looking forward to the next meeting!”



“Very helpful!!!”

“Always gives helpful feedback and advice.”

Every Achieve! student is paired with an Achieve! Graduate Consultant (a current graduate-level student at the University) to work with individually during their first year and beyond. Achieve! students also attend Academic Success Workshops facilitated by our office.

We aim to foster a sense of community in our students by encouraging regular meetings with their Achieve! Graduate Consultant, exploring the numerous resources offered by our campus community, and offering group Academic Success Workshops tailored to meet student needs.

“Great as always, thank you for the support continuously throughout this first year of college, can not thank you enough.”



# Athletic Mentoring Program

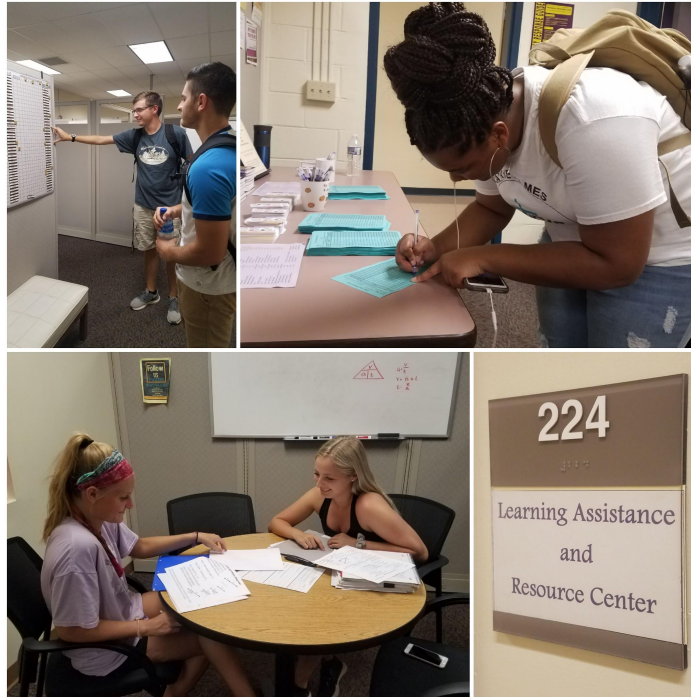
The Mentoring Program exists to provide a service to student-athletes who may be at-risk academically, or are deemed to be in need of services to help to navigate academics at the college level. Graduate level mentors will meet with student-athletes to assist them in both utilizing existing university resources and also to monitor their academic progression throughout the semester. The mentors maintain contact with coaches and professors in order to gain an understanding of each student-athlete's academic situation.

All student-athletes agree to have their academics reviewed by the mentors and coaches. These students must obtain a tutor from the LARC or utilize the writing center on an ongoing basis. They must attend all weekly sessions but are able to attend outside sessions in appropriate areas facilitated by the mentors if available to substitute for the session.

Members of the AMP participate in Athletic Study Hall, a space to get their work done, have a tutor to ask questions to, and learn time management. AMP and the LARC collaborate in this effort to help student-athletes.



To request collaborations, workshops or tutoring please contact the LARC at **610-436-2535** or email **LARC@wcupa.edu**



**Contributors:**

**Kaitlyn Crouse-Machcinski, Assistant Director**  
**Mina Ebrahimi, Graduate Student Intern**