

KPU Learning Centres Annual Report 2012-2013

By Lyn Benn, (Director, Student Development)

In 2012-2013 the Learning Centres moved into the division of Library Resources under the leadership of Todd Mundle, University Librarian. Still under the direction of Lyn Benn, Director for Student Development, the Centres are oriented towards a Learning Commons configuration as we work with other departments to bring a range of services to students in a central place within the campus libraries. The last academic year also enabled us to celebrate the first year of the implementation of the Learning Excellence Model for the delivery of services and support to students at KPU. (See Appendix 1)

Milestones included:

- **Hiring of Learning Strategists – Learning Support; Online Learning Support; Language and Cognition** (3.5 FTE) who provided 757 one-to-one consultations for 311 unique students. Consultations included individual assessments and follow up strategies for academically at-risk. Our Online Learning Strategist designed, developed and implemented KPU's Online Writing Tutor service as well as being at the forefront of the implementation of the *WriteAway* consortium pilot.
- **Certification of staff and faculty Tutor Trainers** including the celebration of **Nancy Dhillon** (Instructional Associate) to be the **first Canadian to be certified as a Tutor Trainer** and consequently **the first Canadian** to be invited to be on the **Board of Directors** for the **National Tutor Association**.
- **Certification of 17 Tutors as “Master level” Paraprofessional tutors**, through the National Tutoring Association (Level 3 tutors only). Upon graduating with their Bachelor degrees these students are eligible for Professional Tutor Certification.
- **Training for 62 Level 1 and 2 tutors: 16** who provide support for writing, **5 for online** tutoring and **41 for course content**.
- Training for **12 International Peer Coaches** and the implementation of the international student peer coaching support.
- Host to Learning Specialist Association of Canada **LSAC International Conference (May 2013)** which attracted over 135 delegates. KPU Tutor Trainers provided a Pre-Conference Tutor Training session for 22 participants for certification. A Post-Conference heralded the first Western Canadian Supplemental Instruction Supervisor training which attracted 20 participants.

The year was marked by a steady demand for assistance for students for whom English is not their first language and for addressing the individual needs of students. The demand for workshops increased over the year such that other campuses were requested to host workshops for 2013.

QUALITY GOALS:

1. **General, Complementary, Integrated and Embedded Services (Tiers 1 & 4 – Learning Excellence Model)**

The Learning Centres work to prepare students for global citizenship through work with cross cultural communication, cross cultural understanding and support for EAL learners. We develop learner engagement to aid student retention and are able to show continuous improvement through programs that are well managed, integrated and transparent. As a testament to these goals the Learning Centres delivered training programs to 91 peer tutors and coaches in the last academic year. These peers then provided 9,250 one-to-one peer tutoring consultations to 2280 unique students in 2012-2013. Faculty and staff assisted 201 Early Alert referrals. An additional 30 Academic faculty provided office hours in the Centres, volunteered services or were given release

time to provide support for Math and English. 189 students attended Boost Camps, and 235 non-unique students attended the 38 Sensational Saturday workshops offered throughout the year. The Step Ahead transition day in January attracted a further 35 new students while the ACE IT for Trades and Technology students served 98 students. Our inaugural 8 week long Academic Writing Program which was co-sponsored by the KSA attracted 19 students. (See Table 1.)

Writing Support for Students

The quality of student writing has been a consistent area of concern within KPU for many years and continues to challenge faculty and service providers. In the 2012-2013 year the Learning Centres faculty worked hard to improve the quality of training for both face-to-face and online writing tutors. For the **face-to-face** writing services, 16 tutors helped 718 students during 1169 appointments. **Online Tutoring** and **WriteAway** writing services employed 5 tutors who helped 229 students with 284 submissions.

Table 1. Student Use of Services and Programs

Program or Service	Students	Sessions
One-to-one tutoring	2280 unique students	9,250 appointments
Face-to-face writing tutoring	718 unique students	1169 appointments
Online writing support	229 unique students	284 submissions
Early Alert referrals	201 unique students	
Academic Boost Camp	189 attendees	2 Boost Camps
Sensational Saturday workshops	235 non-unique students	38 workshops
Step Ahead Transition	35 unique students	1 day
ACE IT Transition	98 unique students	4 x 4 hours
KAWP - Kwantlen Academic Writing Program	19 unique students	8 x 2 hour sessions
Learning Strategist Individual Sessions	311 unique students	757 appointments

Learning Strategy Workshops

The Learning Centre Strategists and guest faculty delivered **38 workshops** for the **Sensational Saturday** series. However, some **31 additional tailored workshops** were presented to specific courses, disciplines or programs within class time. Topics for **in-class presentations** included:

- Anxiety & Learning (8);
- Managing Time and Attention (2);
- Planning Your Study Schedule (1);
- Communication Basics (3);
- Team Building (3);
- Cooperative Learning (1);
- Professionalism (1);
- Mind/ Concept Mapping (2);
- Tests and Exams (2);
- Test taking skills (4);
- Presentations (2);
- Writing Supports (2)

Online Learning Support

The Director, Student Development and the Online Learning Strategist were both at the forefront of working as part of a provincial consortium to implement the *WriteAway* online tutoring program as part of a pilot program designed to trial this approach to eventually serve post-secondary students across the province. The Director, continues to work as part of the *e-Tutoring Concept Committee* which will expand the focus of this consortium approach to pilot online tutoring support for Math and Sciences. The Online Learning Strategist is KPU's Institutional Coordinator and an active member of the Training Working Group that provides continuous development of the training program for tutors. She has recently taken the role of Chair for the 2013-2014 *WriteAway* Advisory Committee to continue the work of the *WriteAway* service.

Our Online Learning Strategist successfully designed, developed and implemented KPU's online writing support services over the past year. In addition, the tutor training education necessary to support tutors in providing online writing support services was developed and delivered to five online tutors who provided 284 peer reviews for 229 students during Fall 2012, Spring 2013, and Summer 2013.

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Program

In March 2013 the Learning Strategist for EAL, Language and Cognition was hired. A comprehensive program for fostering language and learning for EAL students was developed and implemented throughout the summer and into Fall 2013. This program is still under development and it is hoped that over the coming year that students will be able to take advantage of the learning opportunities through out-of-class and in-class programming. The key components are as follows:

Strategic Support for EAL Students in Academic Programs

1. Preparatory program:
 - Academic Skills
2. Introductory programs:
 - a. Learning Skills in Practice Series
 - b. Individual Learning Strategies sessions
3. Fluency Development program:
 - Societies, Language and Culture Discussion Series
4. Academic Support programs:
 - a. Guided study sessions
 - b. Individual Learning Strategies sessions

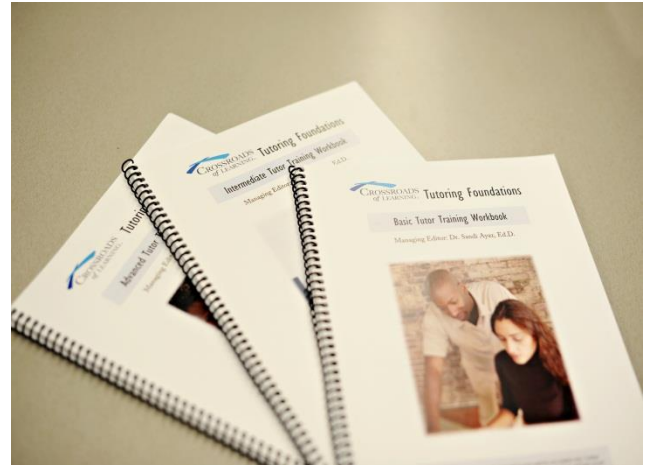


The ***English Conversation Clubs*** took on new life throughout the year with mixed results. We still keep working on the development of both the system for attracting partners into this program as well as the training for the conversation leaders. This is an important type of program designed to bridge the gap between EAL and native English speakers, and to encourage greater student engagement and friendships on campus. We continue to work on ways in which to fully integrate this type of program into student life at KPU, working with OISS, Student Engagement, ELST and Academic faculty.

Student Experience and Engagement

Peer Tutors and Coaches

The Peer Tutoring and Coaching Programs are designed to be a professional development opportunity for students who meet the criteria and apply for these positions. In the last academic year **91 students received in-depth and ongoing training at three levels**, on topics relevant to their responsibilities. In addition they receive support for realizing personal goals, extending their professional development and enhancing essential skills so vital for student success. At the end of their training and after providing 75 hours of face to face tutoring, tutors and coaches are eligible for Paraprofessional Tutor status. Upon graduating with a bachelor's degree they **can upgrade this status to Professional Tutor** through international certification with the National Tutoring Association.



The Learning Centres continue to work on the development of excellent tutoring **support for EAL and ELST students** recognizing the unique challenges these students have as they incorporate new linguistic, cognitive and physical adaptations into their lives. Beyond this we are establishing a greater awareness of the cross-cultural needs of students and faculty as we build capacity in the university to work for effectively with the diverse student bodies we have across and within each of our campuses. To this end we are providing tutors both in and out of the class, and are working with ELST departments to train new classroom support student tutors. To date we have trained **23 EAL Peer Tutors and International Peer Coaches**.

International Peer Coaches

In Fall 2012, 11 international students were selected to become International Peer Coaches in an effort to support international students who were experiencing academic and/or transitional difficulties. During Spring 2013 the coaches received intensive training and were matched with various international students as OISS Advisors referred students to the Learning Centres for assistance. This program is **expanding** in the coming year to include the **opportunity for new international students to connect with Peer Coaches prior to their arrival** at KPU. This peer to peer connection will offer reassurance and a friendly face for new comers to KPU in the coming years.



Retention Initiatives: Academic Boost Camps

Academic Boost Camp is a free one-day program offered through the Learning Centres to help students, particularly those who are academically at-risk, improve their grades and make the changes they need to persist through to the successful completion of their credential. Students are provided with a range of workshops, a scheduling system, a brief text “How to Get Good Grades at a College or University” (Linda O’Brien), access to a range of print and online learning resources, lunch and refreshments. Boost camps are currently offered in March and August each year as these times attract the largest participant groups. Students who have participated in Boost Camps since August 2009 have been tracked to examine progress, with the following results.

Academic Performance Tracking

Average increase or decrease in participant Term GPA in the semesters following Boost Camp completion									
Date of ABC	Nov 2009	Feb 2010	May 2010	Nov 2010	Mar 2011	Aug 2011	Mar 2012	Aug 2012	Mar 2013
Semester immediately following	.06	.06	.00	.75	.76	.54	-.08	.56	.21
2 nd	.53	.90	.49	.20	.62	.49	-.29	.40	
3 rd		.51	.98	.27	.45	.75	-.07	1.34	

Since the first 2008 pilot program **667 students have participated** in Academic Boost Camps with the average **retention rate** of students being **between 68% and 87%** for three semesters following attendance at Boost Camp.

Topics presented at ABCs include:

- How did I get here? Assessing your situation
- What is the meaning of academic probation?
- Discover your personal learning styles
- Deep, surface and achieving approaches to learning
- Managing your time well
- School and test anxiety
- Procrastination
- Career planning – why am I here?
- I bought the textbook, now what?
- Moving ahead in math
- Moving from a B to an A
- Now what? Moving ideas into action

Monthly Workshop Series: Sensational Saturdays

Over 235 students have taken advantage of the 38 workshops offered by Learning Strategists and guest faculty who have assisted students via workshops which include but are not limited to:

- Individual and Group Presentations
- Learning Styles
- Memory techniques
- Motivation
- Note taking
- Mapping
- Presentation Skills
- Procrastination
- Concentration
- Projects & Assignments
- Questioning
- Receiving and Giving Feedback
- Scheduling, Managing Time
- Self-editing
- Stress and anxiety coping strategies
- Study strategies
- Test taking
- Textbook reading
- Working in Groups & Teams
- Writing Academic Papers

Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS)

The PASS program continues to support Biology 1160 and more recently ENTR 3140. These historically difficult courses often challenge students who need to develop more effective learning strategies and deeper understanding in order to do well in these courses. Those students who attend PASS sessions consistently perform better than those who don't.

Transition Initiatives

Transition programs are designed to provide students with the skills and strategies they can apply as they proceed through the semester and negotiate the usual challenges facing students. These include a focus on the importance of time and stress management, maintaining focus and concentration, using notes and study strategies to enhance learning and engagement in class, preparing for test and reviewing tests and feedback. Some students have additional challenges of family, relationships, work, finances, disabilities, extra-curricular activities, community involvement that they need to consider. Transition programs raise awareness around these situations and present ways to manage personal, social, professional and academic roles.

Step Ahead is a one day program for **new students who are entering into the Spring Semester** at KPU. It runs prior to Orientation. Students are offered hands-on strategies for getting started effectively for the semester and are introduced to the supports that are available throughout the semester.

It's About U – 3 Day Transition Program



During the Spring and Summer of 2013 Learning Centre staff and faculty worked on the development of a three-day transition program designed to target potential students at risk entering into KPU. This target group includes students who are underprepared, those who may exhibit high anxiety and stress levels, have learning difficulties or disabilities, have language learning difficulties, are mature learners, are international students experiencing transition issues, and those who intend to keep working full time or over 20 hours part time, those may just have trouble acclimatizing to post-secondary expectations.

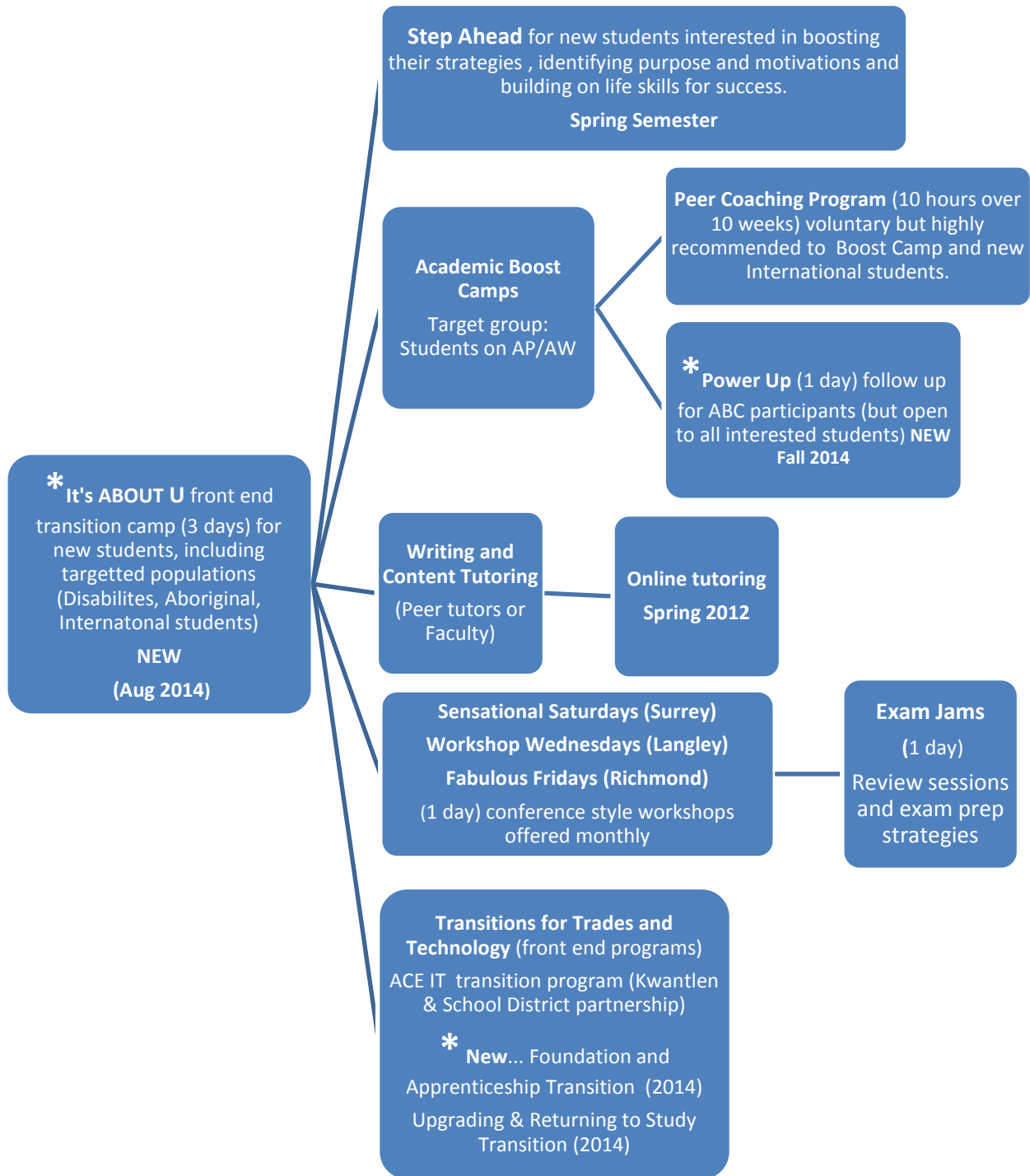
This program is ready to implement in August 2014 and promotion of this program is underway through the Office of New Students, Academic Advising, School District Learning Support staff and community groups.

ACE IT Transition Conference for Trades and Technology

This program is available to high school students who are able to take advantage of getting a head start on a trade or technology qualification. These 4 hour conferences include a connection with peer coaches, learning support services, IT training, communication, problem solving, learning styles and incidental learning awareness sessions so that students feel more confident entering into their programs either on campus or back in the school setting. Sessions are offered 4 times on a Friday or Saturday. In the past two years 85 and 89 students have attended these conferences. The success rate of students who have attended these over the last two years is 98%.



Overview of Learning Centre Retention and Transition Programs for Students:



Community Engagement

Community Adult Literacy Program (CALP)

The Learning Centre CALP tutors and coordinator have been instrumental in working with community organizations such as PICS, FIRST and SUCCESS in Surrey and Richmond to deliver vocational literacy sessions to participants who have been identified or who have self-identified as being ready to work on the reading, writing, listening and speaking skills that they need to develop in order to prepare for entry or re-entry to the Canadian workforce. Initially **six vocational literacy tutors were trained** to deliver this program at a variety of venues including the Richmond public libraries, Guildford library and the KPU Richmond and Surrey libraries. After refining the program we currently have a CALP coordinator and three tutors working two times a week at Surrey and three times a week in Richmond. We have also established a link to the Langley Literacy program and hope to foster a more collaborative relationship over the coming year.

After developing the vocational curriculum and training tutors, care has been taken to tailor the materials to specific learner needs and goals. Results of initial learner intake assessments are used to adjust lesson plans. Activities included in each program are chosen to provide a balance between opportunities for learning and opportunities for practice to enhance learner confidence. Currently there are **eight modules** developed by KPU Learning Centre faculty and tutors, that CALP tutors and participants can use to build competence and confidence in gaining better literacy skills for employment.

Because of the success of the first program, **funding was forthcoming from AVED** for further vocational literacy development **for 2013-2014**. The program currently enjoys considerable success at Surrey as the stakeholders have developed a solid framework for ongoing collaboration, monitoring and assessment. Promotion of the Richmond programs still present challenges but we continue to work on this area. Possible areas for growth might include incorporation of target minority populations with increasingly emergent needs, such as Aboriginal learners, ESL learners (e.g. 'English in the workplace') and employers with significant ESL staff, as well as literacy training for staff at partner agencies.

Professional Development and Conference Presentations:

Awards: Kim Tomiak

Awarded \$5,692.98 through the February 2013 application process for the 0.6% Faculty Professional Development Fund Committee in support of her proposal "PhD in Adult Learning".

Conference Presentations

Kim Tomiak:

- Learning Specialists Association of Canada National Conference, May 2013 - *Panel presentation: Consortial E-Tutoring in BC: From Concept to Reality*
- Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education Conference, June 2013 - *Roundtable presentation: Promoting Social Presence in Online Learning Communities*

Alice Macpherson:

- LSAC Pacific Regional Conference, Langley, December 2012 - *Developing Tutoring Portfolios*.
- LSAC National Conference, May 2013 - *Developing Tutoring Portfolios*
- CTDAC, Kelowna, May 29, 2013: *Universal Design for Learning Difficulties*.
- FDW Senior Trainer, Burnaby, May 2013
- Director, Fall Institute for ISW Facilitators, Bowen Island, November 23, 24, 25, 2012

Marti Alger:

- LSAC Pacific Regional Conference December 2012 – *Technology and Learning*
- LSAC National Conference in May, 2013 *the Kwantlen Academic Writing Program*. Co-facilitator - Fatima Zaidi, Kwantlen Student Association.

Lyn Benn and Laura Aguilera:

- Presentation at International First Year Experience July 2012, Vancouver - *ACE IT Transition Program for Trades and technology*

Lyn Benn, Laura Aguilera, Barbara Thomas-Bruzzese (KPU), Linda Kingsland, Irene Volinets (CC). Roundtable. CACUSS National Conference, June 2012 *Smart Transition, Smarter Students*.

Lyn Benn, Laura Aguilera. Counsellors' Conference. May 2012 - *Smartening up - Transition Programs for ACE IT and First Year Students*

Nancy Dhillon and Laura Arneson:

- LSAC National Conference in May, 2013 – *Pre Conference Full Day – Level 1 tutor Training for Certification through NTA*.

Lyn Benn, Nancy Dhillon, Genevieve Grant (KPU) and Bob Lasiewicz (Crossroads of Learning):

- CACUSS National Conference, July 2013 – *Approaches to Tutor Training*

Learning Strategists' Association of Canada's National Conference, 2013

Exception praise goes to the Learning Centre staff and faculty, student volunteers, guest speakers Dr Nancy Schmidt, Dr Roland Case and Dr David Burns, Sodexo catering, but especially to **Michelle Ikoma** who took a dedicated and highly professional role in coordinating **the Learning Strategists' Association of Canada's National Conference, 2013** which attracted 135 delegates from across North America and beyond.



KPU was also the host institution and coordinated the **Pacific Region's Learning Specialist Association of Canada (LSAC) Conference in December 2012**, where 22 Student Service Professionals attended from post-secondary institutions mainly in the lower mainland.

Congratulations go to **Laura Arneson** who was elected to be the LSAC Pacific Region's Representative who is responsible for liaising with the National association and organizing local professional development activities.

Acknowledgements

It is through the personal and professional contributions of the following Learning Centre staff and faculty that all this work has been achievable. KPU is indeed fortunate to have such a dedicated team working to support student learning and development.

Learning Strategists:

Marti Alger, M Ed (Learning Support)
 Alice Macpherson, Ph D (Learning Support)
 Kim Tomiak, Ph D (cand) (Online Learning)
 Laura Aguilera, Ph D (EAL, Learning and Cognition)
 Susan Vincent, M Ed (Learning Support) Contract

Instructional Associates:

Laura Arneson, M Ed
 Nancy Dhillon, B A
 Adam Vincent, M A (cand)
 Joan Mauch, B A (on leave)

Learning Centre Assistants:

Mark Styles, M Ed
 Harpreet Sandhu, M A

Auxiliaries:

Judith Siame, B Ed
 Michelle Ikoma, M Ed
 Parvinder Dhariwal, M A
 Kailee Bruce, B A

Administration

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to have been welcomed into the Library Resources Division by Todd Mundle, Ann McBurnie and the host of staff and faculty within Library Services and Learner Resources departments. Under Todd's leadership the Learning Centre services and programs have flourished and we look forward to a continued partnership with our newfound kindred spirits as we realize the Vision 2018 for KPU.

Faculty Appreciation

We appreciate the considerable contribution of faculty who have devoted instructional time, office hours, or volunteer time in all Centres. Their contribution through training, modeling and mentoring for tutors is considerable and highly valued, so it is with much gratitude that the administration, faculty, staff, tutors and student thank:

David Burns – Special appreciation as guest presenter, motivator, conspirator for good things.

Aimee Begalka
 Alex Liu
 Alison Nishihara
 Allyson Rozell
 Brooke Mills
 Carol Stewart
 Colin McLeod
 Dale Dearden
 David Sud
 Fergal Callaghan
 Helen Bourgeois
 Jan Verster
 Jean McKendry
 Jennifer Williams
 Jennifer Wolfe
 Joan Robertson
 John Inglis

John Rupert
 John Shepherd
 Judy Bicep
 Kegan Doyle
 Kim Richter
 Laurette Korman
 Neil Kennedy
 Patrick Duffy
 Sepand Jazzi
 Serguei Novoceiskii
 Stephen Peplow
 Suzanne Pearce
 Teresa Hofstedt
 Tracey Kinney
 Ulricke Kesler
 Xin Liu
 (with great apology to anyone left out).

Appendix I
Learning Excellence Model Overview

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
General	Complementary	Integrated	Embedded
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills development • Tutoring programs • Intervention and Retention programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualized Assistance • Online Learning Support • Course based skills & strategies • Work with faculty to design & adapt learning materials or strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attached to course / assignment • Collaborative: content, scaffolding, timing • Input into assignment • Several in-class visits • Part of a team of support professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes all of the integrated skills & knowledge components as part of a course. • Scaffolds strategies and developmental activities across degree programs.
Description	Description	Description	Description
<p>This stage represents the time honoured approaches that the Centres have adopted since their inception. This includes a focus on peer tutoring as a key component to supporting students in their academic success as well as stand-alone intervention programs such as Boost Camps, Early Alert support, Sensational Saturdays and Exam Jams. There is some presence in the classroom, but the majority of the programming occurs separately. Data gathering relates more to student use than student needs.</p>	<p>This stage sets in motion opportunities to enhance individual support for students as well as paving the way for learning support services to be offered more generally via interaction with instructors. Individualized student support will be offered via consultations with Learning Strategists, who will also work with Instructional Associates to build programs to meet identified student needs. Given the diverse student population, many of whom are underprepared, work 20 – 30 hours a week and have little support at home, online learning support is essential as all students can access this. Stage 2 also encourages faculty to seek support for students through tailored learning seminars or workshops that address identified student needs within courses. Workshops and assistance with the development of learning activities or materials complement the instruction students receive. Faculty work collaboratively with Learning Strategists and Instructional Associates. Data gathering and statistical analysis develops.</p>	<p>Integrated programs have proven to be more effective in developing and consolidating skills than services and courses dispersed through traditional academic departments. The Learning Strategists take a key role in working closely and collaboratively with instructors on courses as they find ways to integrate skill development through content, scaffolding and timing of the learning activities. Learning Strategists are able to identify key strategies that enhance the learning outcomes associated with various content areas and are available to consult with faculty regarding student learning issues as they arise from time to time. Continue in-class and complementary workshops. Data, statistical analysis and reporting available to KPU community.</p> <p>Preparing for Supplemental Instruction Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) Program through identification of courses and interested instructors.</p>	<p>Embedding learning skills and knowledge within the disciplines allows for the richest of learning environments and the cultivation of learning excellence. Embedding skills involves a stronger focus on student learning outcomes and offers the institution a way of identifying student development and progress in a more holistic way so that interventions can be sought in a pro-active and timely way. Working in partnership with faculty, Learning Centre staff and faculty provide input into foundation courses or programs to ensure students are provided with a balance of content and process skills that they will need to develop as lifelong learners.</p>

Appendix 2

In-Class presentations

- Anxiety & Learning (8);
- Managing Time and Attention (1);
- Planning Your Study Schedule (1);
- Communication Basics (3);
- Team Building (3);
- Cooperative Learning (1);
- Professionalism (1);
- Mind/ Concept Mapping (2);
- Tests and Exams (2);
- Test taking skills (4);
- Presentations (2);
- Writing Supports (2)

Key concerns about which students are seeking assistance

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| • Citations | • Presentations |
| • Communication Skills | • Procrastination |
| • Concentration | • Professionalism |
| • Concept Mapping | • Projects & Assignments |
| • Conflict Management | • Questioning |
| • Critical Thinking | • Receiving and Giving Feedback |
| • Critique vs. Criticism | • Scheduling, Managing Time |
| • Cross Cultural Communications | • Self-editing |
| • Individual and Group Presentations | • Stress and anxiety coping strategies |
| • Learning Styles | • Study strategies |
| • Memory techniques | • Test taking |
| • Motivation | • Textbook reading |
| • Note taking | • Working in Groups & Teams |
| • Portfolios | • Writing Academic Papers |