Unit Plan: Description of the Unit

Unit: Learning Connection

Division or Area to Which You Report: Academic Services via Language Arts

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(To be read and responded to primarily by Marketing and Outreach, and used for public relations, posted on department pages by webmaster, and used in catalog or brochures. About one paragraph and an image or picture. Should include unit’s mission statement. Description will roll over each year with updates as needed.)

The Learning Connection is made up of the learning support programs offered through Academic Services, including: PATH (formerly Tutorials), the WRAC Center, the Math Lab, the Language Center (ESL), ChabotLink peer advising, and a burgeoning Center for Teaching and Learning. Two additional centers are being developed: The Communications Center and a World Language Center. In addition, two programs are being successfully piloted at the present time: Peer Led Team Learning (two chemistry classes and one math class) and the Learning Assistant program.

Our services for students include drop-in and scheduled tutoring for students in subjects across the curriculum; study groups in ECD and anatomy; conversation groups; in-class tutors; peer chemistry and math workshop leaders; faculty-student tutorials in reading, writing, and ESL; and CAI. All Learning Connection services and programs are instructor/counselor-driven: instructors and counselors recommend tutors, train tutors, advise on programs, develop and run pilot programs, comment on tutors’ feedback on tutoring sessions; select software. All tutors and peer advisors are current Chabot College students, recently active in the subject or class in which they are tutoring.

A staff of two full-time instructional assistants are dedicated to Learning Connection programs. Their efforts are supplemented by two part-time IA’s and IA’s outside of the Learning Connection who are cross-trained and scheduled according to their availability and Learning Connection needs.

The Learning Connection strives to be innovative, collaborative, creative, efficient, and need and data driven as it pursues resources and opportunities to support teaching and learning. For example, a CSUEB-Chabot partnership was piloted in a math class in fall 2006 and was pursued in fall 2007. However, once we arranged for a life sciences instructor to serve as the life sciences Learning Connection liaison and tutor trainer, the problem of not having tutors in higher level sciences courses, a reason for the CSUEB-Chabot partnership, diminished. As a result, we are holding off on the CSUEB partnership program until need and interest among instructors surface.

The Learning Connection is collaborating with the Office of Student Services and Tammeil Gilkerson to successfully pilot a peer advising program in spring 2008.

In 2007-08, the Learning Connection has collaborated with the Math Department’s mastery learning BSI pilot by providing proctors for make-up quizzes. (The Learning
Connection also met with the vice presidents of Student Services and Academic Services, as well as with the Assessment Center coordinator, to pursue the possibility of a campus-wide proctoring program.)

Though each Learning Connection program works to achieve its specific goals, under the Learning Connection umbrella, each program collaborates with the others to accomplish the Learning Connection mission:

The Learning Connection provides positive, supportive environments and resources for students to work together with instructors, staff, and peer tutors to achieve the broad education goals of the California community colleges and of Chabot College. Most importantly, the Learning Connection supports students' achievement of their individual goals, whether they be technical and career-vocational, transfer, GE, basic skills improvement, ESL improvement, or personal development.

Furthermore, the Learning Connection is committed to professional development and to providing instructors and staff with opportunities to learn about and to pilot new curricula, teaching methods, and learning support strategies. Part of this commitment involves ongoing, formative assessment. This assessment occurs regularly and includes inquiry that is focused both inward and outward into, for example, how effectively disciplines across campus and the Learning Connection are working together to link classroom instruction and Learning Connection activities. The Learning Connection and Program Review work closely together on inter-disciplinary and inter-program assessment, as well as on solving problems and promoting opportunities for all segments of the college to work with one another to support our own and students' learning.