SOME OF THE DETAILS

Learning Assistants may be scheduled in every lecture and/or lab hour plus two “out-of-class” hours for lecture classes. For example, during fall and spring semesters, an LA in a Biology 2B class could be scheduled for up to 11 hours a week: 3 hours for lecture, 6 hours for lab, and 2 “out-of-class” hours.

Like all peer tutors, Learning Assistants are paid $8.75 an hour to start. After 200 hours, their pay may be increased to $9.25 per hour, depending on job performance. All Learning Connection tutors may work a total of four semesters.

In order to be eligible for a position, tutors must be primarily Chabot students (not graduates or students who have transferred) who are enrolled in at least three academic units. They need to be recommended by their Chabot College instructor, and they need to be able to attend the required tutor training class(es).

Training Requirements for All Tutors, including Learning Assistants

All tutors are required to enroll in and attend TUTR 1A, Tutoring Theory and Practice, which is a half-unit course taught by the Tutor Training Programs coordinator. In addition, all tutors must receive nine hours of content-area tutor training. In the case of Learning Assistants, the instructors with whom they are working provide these nine hours of training.

ARE YOU INTERESTED?

If you are interested in having a Learning Assistant work with your students in your classroom, simply complete the enclosed “Learning Assistant Request” form and return it to Chasity Whiteside, Learning Connection Administrative Assistant, in Room 2351 (PATH). You can also download the request form from our website, complete it, save it, and send it as an attachment to cwhiteside@chabotcollege.edu.

Because of board deadlines, HR deadlines, and Learning Connection tutor training deadlines, we must have all tutors hired by the first week of classes each semester, so please submit requests for Learning Assistants as soon as possible. Learning Assistants who apply the first week of classes in the semester cannot be hired for that semester.
WHAT LEARNING ASSISTANTS CANNOT DO

The Learning Assistant program is different from the graduate or teaching assistant model many instructors are familiar with. Learning Assistants are peer tutors who work with students in the classroom. As tutors, Learning Assistants do not participate in assessing student performance or work, nor do they serve as clerical assistants. The following are clearly NOT the responsibilities of tutors:

- Grading quizzes, tests, student writing, projects…
- Correcting student work, especially if the student is not present
- Searching the web for instructional materials or other resources for the instructor
- Photocopying materials for the instructor
- Supporting Blackboard sites for the instructor
- Addressing a student’s special learning or language needs (e.g., for students with learning disabilities or for those who are new to speaking English) that the instructor does not understand well, unless the tutor is receiving special training for this work.

Tutors assigned as Learning Assistants who are working in areas outside their core tutoring function will be removed as Learning Assistants.

WHAT LEARNING ASSISTANTS CAN DO

Some of the ways Learning Assistants can support student learning include:

- In lecture, Learning Assistants can model strong student behavior, by taking notes or noticing when students might need to ask a question and encouraging them to ask.
- In discussion, Learning Assistants can facilitate (rather than dominate) the discussion by asking clarifying questions, suggesting ideas students might want to consider, providing new perspectives on an issue, or summarizing the discussion.
- Learning Assistants can facilitate small groups by framing the work of the group in ways that support the learning goals, by bringing reticent students into the small group conversation, and by encouraging students to come to class prepared.
- When students are engaged in individual work, Learning Assistants can “check in” with students to help them persist when they are “stuck,” and to assist when a student is off on the wrong track or has misread. Learning Assistants can also help students know when they should call on the instructor for support.
- Learning Assistants can follow up with individual students or facilitate peer study groups during their “out-of-class” hours.

In other words, Learning Assistants can contribute when students are grappling with concepts and the application of concepts, whether the concepts involve applying effective study strategies, knowing how to take lecture notes, understanding the reading, asking questions, or appreciating the perspective of the discipline.

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On the cover: ‘Colin Pejman 2009’