University College News

SPRING 2015

From Dr. Sudkamp

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University College is
on the move—both
literally and figuratively.
Construction on the
state-of-the-art Student
Success Center and Classroom Building is
progressing rapidly and University College
is looking forward to consolidating student
services in its new home in late May. Starting
in the summer, First-Year Programs, the
Academic Success Centers, Foundation
Studies Programs, and Academic Advising
will be co-located with five active learning
classrooms and student study space to
provide immediate access to all academic
support in the same building in which many
key gateway courses will be offered. While
anticipating one move, another was recently
completed—the Academic Advising unit has
temporarily relocated to 350 University Hall.

Our New Newsletter

We are excited to launch University College
News as part of an ongoing effort to keep
our campus constituents apprised of the
innovative programming and evolution
within the academic and student success
areas of our division. While this inaugural
edition is in print, we will be sending
subsequent editions electronically as part
of the university’s sustainability initiative.
Look for them in your email inbox in the
future. Also in line with our commitment
to leadership and sustainability, the new
Student Success Center and Classroom
Building will be LEED certified—built and
operated to minimize non-renewable
energy use while helping elevate Wright
State as a visible leader in the community.

Learning Communities’ 15th Year

This year, First-Year Programs is celebrating
its 15th year of Learning Communities
success. Statistics support a 4.9 percent
higher fall-to-spring retention rate
for students participating in Learning
Communities. The common text for 2015–16
academic year was recently announced:
The Cellist of Sarajevo by Steven Galloway.
You will be hearing much more about the
activities surrounding this campus event as
the new academic year approaches. I would
like to thank the Common Text Committee
members who annually face the challenging
task of finding a book that meets the goals
set for the Common Text—to provide a
unifying learning experience for all entering
Wright State students.

Success Centers’ Continued Growth

The past year has seen remarkable growth
in student participation within our Academic
Success Centers: the Math Learning Center,
the Writing Center, Supplemental Instruction,
and Tutoring. The number of students served
by these units increased by 14 percent
overall from Fall 2013 to Fall 2014. We thank
the advisors and faculty who identify students
in need of that extra academic support and
recommend these programs.

Along with the change of location,
University College will be moving forward
with innovations in advising and student
support programming to better serve our
students and the academic colleges. You
will be hearing about these services and
innovations in upcoming issues of this
newsletter.

Redesign Results: The Math Studio

The Developmental Mathematics Redesign
following the conversion from quarters to semesters
was accomplished with the creation of the Math Studio.
Pre-algebra, elementary algebra, and intermediate
algebra were combined into a single course.
The Math Studio is a high-tech, student-centered
environment designed to help students learn
mathematics by interacting with the instructional team
and the ALEKS web-based software. Upon completing
an initial assessment, each student receives a
personalized curriculum to address areas that need
development. This allows each student to manage his/her
study time to focus on learning only the information
they do not know. ALEKS provides the advantage
of one-on-one instruction and sufficient practice to
promote mastery of the material. The instructional
team, made up of teaching faculty and highly trained
proctors, monitor student progress and proactively
provide one-on-one instruction to students on an
individual basis.

With the Math Studio and redesigned curriculum,
passing rates for developmental mathematics went from 58 percent to 74 percent.
The developmental writing curriculum was redesigned following the conversion from quarters to semesters, incorporating two courses that provide “just in time” remediation. The success rate for students in the redesigned for-credit classes increased to 76 percent, compared with a 63 percent success rate for students in the development course the year prior to the redesign. In addition, 213 students who previously would have simply completed a developmental course instead received credit toward their graduation.
The mission of the University Writing Center is to help students become more skilled, confident, and independent writers and students. We take a student-centered rather than a paper-centered approach. This is reflected in our coaching mindset.

Our peer writing coaches have demonstrated writing ability and a desire to connect with other students. Coaches are trained to assess a student’s readiness for growth as both a writer and a student and to provide proper feedback based on the student’s strengths and weaknesses. We realize we cannot assume students know how to operate in a university environment. So, while our academic focus is on writing, our broader focus is on helping students successfully navigate college. We stand ready to help them directly or refer them to offices on campus that have relevant expertise.

Students of all ability levels can benefit from the University Writing Center. We hope you will encourage them to see the center as a place where they can become successful academic writers and successful university students.

—David Bringhurst, Director

Academic Advising

Academic advisors in University College, the largest college at Wright State University, empower students to successfully matriculate into their degree-granting colleges. Ten academic advisors assist more than 3,000 students.

To better serve these students, advisors have been utilizing Education Advisory Board’s RAPS, an innovative student success technology platform. Advisors Genevieve Jomantas and Brittany Erwin, along with lead academic advisor Shamon Green, are three of the technology’s top users.

RAPS allows advisors to rapidly assess a student’s risk level within a particular major given past academic performance. It also details their predicted success in alternative majors and recommends career pathways that major affords. RAPS enables advisors to create watch lists for at-risk students and sets reminders to engage in outreach campaigns. This proactive approach fosters intrusive advising that puts student success first.

—Brittany Erwin, Academic Advisor
Tutoring Services and Supplemental Instruction (SI) trains tutors, study coaches, and SI leaders to deliver peer-based academic help. The SI program has achieved remarkable expansion over the past year due to the efforts of Valerie Brown, Tutoring Services and Supplemental Instruction Specialist. Whether these sessions take place in the Student Success Center and Classroom Building, Dunbar Library, or in departmental sectors, we are proud to be the radial point for academic teams campus-wide. Our goal is to continue to expand our reach to reciprocally reach out to faculty and staff.

The support of administrative staff and academic teams has helped us build a compassionate and caring family for Tutoring Services and SI. Faculty and staff can help us exponentially boost the number of quality academic students who serve as tutors, study coaches, and SI leaders. With that reciprocal reach, we can efficiently fulfill the demand for tutors, especially in math and sciences, with high-quality students. An active learner is a curious learner. If you find curious, attentive leaders who are patient, please encourage them to apply with us!

—Folade Speaks, Director

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