

Department of Academic Learning

2008 STEWARDSHIP REVIEW

Purposes and Outcomes

The Department of Academic Learning aims to support the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and BYU-Idaho. Its mission is to:

1. Build testimonies of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and encourage living its principles by

reinforcing the gospel truth that every person has been blessed with different gifts and talents. Living the gospel includes giving when we can and receiving when we must. For example, if a student is good at math but struggles with reading, that student might work as a math tutor, but get a reading tutor for help with literature.

2. Provide a quality education for students of diverse interests and abilities by

offering appropriate academic assistance for all admitted students to BYU-Idaho. This includes international students, second language speakers, students with disabilities, non traditional students, and students across all disciplines.

3. Prepare students for lifelong learning, for employment, and for their roles as citizens and parents by

coaching tutors and students in the art of “learning how to learn” and in “learning how to love learning.” This includes being thoughtful and having integrity in relationships with others and in academic and professional pursuits. The students and tutors act on opportunities to lead with a small “L” by pursuing true discipleship via quietly reaching out to others.

4. Maintain a wholesome academic, cultural, social, and spiritual environment by

preserving the Spirit of Ricks.

Description of Department

Description of Department

The Department of Academic Learning provides a gathering place for students to engage in teaching and learning. It fosters a non threatening, friendly atmosphere where students are able to “give and take” as their different gifts, needs, and situations merit.

The department consists of developmental classes, peer tutoring, six Learning Centers, and services for students with disabilities.

The department offers developmental classes for elective credit in English, math, and study skills. These classes are designed to help students build strong academic foundations upon which they can build.

We provide meaningful employment for over 300 peer tutors every semester. Training these tutors is an integral part of our charge. These peer tutors work one-on-one and in small groups. The Department of Academic Learning exemplifies the BYU-Idaho Learning Model. Students, tutors, and teachers all teach for and learn from one another. Underlying all the goals of the department is the desire to help individuals become honest, independent, life long learners.

Students are served through six Learning Centers. The centers are gathering places of teaching and learning. They each have a Center Director, but to incorporate the BYU-Idaho Learning Model are run by students as a rule. They are the

Reading Center – Sister Engstrom

Writing Center – Sister Morgan

Math Study Center – Brother Llewellyn

Study Skills Center – Brother Croasmun

Tutoring Center – Brother Teichert

English Transitional Center – Brother Hazard

Services for Students with a Disability (SSD) are also coordinated through the department. Brother Taylor is the director of SSD. The department provides many of the accommodations, required by law, for these students.

The Academic Learning Department is located on the second floor of the east wing of the McKay Library. There are also satellite locations around campus.

The Department supports all classes on campus including the new foundation courses as they roll out. **In the beginning, tutors for these courses will be difficult to find. This is because there is not a pool of students who have already successfully completed the classes.** But, with time, this will not be a problem.

The developmental classes prepare under prepared students for increased success in foundation and all courses.

Equal Opportunities across Semesters Coursework Offered

In order to provide all students the same opportunities across semesters, the department offers the same courses and number of sections each semester. The chart shows the course offerings and number of sections for each semester.

ENGLISH (12 sections per semester)				
Course	Winter	Summer	Fall	Total
English 101	6 sections	6 sections	6 sections	18 sections
English 106	2	2	2	6
English 107	2	2	2	6
English 108	1	1	1	3
English 109	1	1	1	3
MATH (9 sections per semester)				
Course	Winter	Summer	Fall	Total
Math 100 A	1	1	1	3
Math 100 B	6	6	6	18
Math 101	2	2	2	6
STUDY SKILLS CLASSES (7 sections per semester)				
Course	Winter	Summer	Fall	Total
GS 102	6	6	6	18
GS 105	1	1	1	3
STUDY SKILLS MODULES (8 sections per semester)				
Course	Winter	Summer	Fall	Total
GS 103A	1	1	1	3
GS 103B	1	1	1	3
GS 103C	1	1	1	3
GS 103D	1	1	1	3
GS 103E	1	1	1	3
GS 103F	1	1	1	3
GS 103J	1	1	1	3
GS 103	1	1	1	3
TUTOR TRAINING (5 sections per semester)				
Course	Winter	Summer	Fall	Total
GS 108A	2	2	2	6
GS 108B	1	1	1	3
GS 108C	1	1	1	3
GS 108D	1	1	1	3

Faculty and Other Personnel

The department consists of eight full time faculty members, two full time administrators, a full time secretary, a student secretary, and two adjunct faculty members. They are:

Deborah Reed – Secretary

Richard G. Taylor – Services for Students with Disabilities
B.A., Brigham Young University, 1969; M.A., University of Northern Colorado, 1973; Ph.D., University of Idaho, 1978.

Thomas D. Croasmun – Study Skills Center
B.S., M.S., Brigham Young University, 1968, 1970; M.Ed., University of Maine, 1988.

Sharon Faye Morgan – Writing Center
B.A., M.A., Brigham Young University, 1978, 1983.

Daniel B. Baird – Math Center
B.S., M.S., Utah State University, 1995, 2006.

Richard Charles Llewellyn – Math Center
B.S., Brigham Young University, 1995; M.S., Purdue University, 1997.

Julie Ann Engstrom – Reading Center
B.A., Brigham Young University, 1971; M.A., Boise State University, 1994

Sheldon John Lawrence – Reading Center
B.A., M.A., Utah State University, 2002, 2004. D.A., Idaho State University (in progress; completion date: fall 2009).

Gregory Fife Hazard – English Transitional Center
B.S., M.Ed., Brigham Young University, 1983, 1995.

D.J. Teichert – Tutoring Center
B.A., Southern Utah University, 1997; MPA Idaho State University, 2000.

Doug Ricks – Assistive Technology Specialist
A.A., Ricks College, 1984; B.S., BYU-Idaho, 2004.

Kristin Ballou – Adjunct Faculty
B.S., Utah State University, 1986. (30 hours of graduate work beyond the B.S.)

Amanda Hansen – Adjunct Faculty
B.S., BYU-Idaho, 2004. M.A., Texas A&M (in progress)

Emily Lynn – Student Secretary

Significant Changes in Department

Significant Changes

Tutor training has evolved in each of the centers to be more in line with the BYU-Idaho Learning Model and to meet student needs. With the addition of an assistive technology specialist, Services for Students with Disabilities is catching up technologically. As a result, the quality of the BYU-Idaho experience has improved for many students. Data collection through the TutorTrac system has become more diverse and user friendly. The campus wide faculty now receive an automated month end report through e-mail, from the TutorTrac system, listing their students who used any of the centers during the month. The way we schedule has changed in response to the 14 week semesters. Department inservices, including both formal meetings and informal “get togethers” have increased and improved.

Midst all the changing and evolving, there were three very positive “stand out” changes for 2007. These were online learning, space utilization, and budget. There were also some challenging changes in regards to scheduling.

First, the study skills modules were put online, and are now exclusively offered that way. By doing this, more students were served. Comparing Fall Semester of 2006 (off line modules) to

Fall Semester of 2007 (online modules), there was an increase from 247 registered students to 360 registered students. As we move into 2008, that number continues to grow.

Second, to be more efficient, we rearranged the way we utilize our allotted space. As a result, we served students better. By putting the Study Skills Modules online, the space previously used by them was made available. The Study Skills director and assistant Math Center director switched offices. The Math Center absorbed the Study Skills space. This doubled the math tutoring area. Previous to the change, math tutors were spilling over into the Tutoring and Writing Centers. By increasing the math space, the Tutoring and Writing Centers were able to “reclaim” space that had been lost to math tutors. A small steel case cubicle was put in the Reading Center for the Study Skills Assistants to use as a place to operate from. This took some space from the Reading Center, but seems to be working well. Students are being served better because the environment is less crowded and more academically friendly.

Third, the tutor wage budget was adjusted to meet the actual amount spent annually. For the first time, we have been able to stay within the allotted tutor wage budget. It felt good. The Tutor wage money was redistributed among the different centers to accurately reflect where the money is used and to give the center directors more of a personal stewardship.

Next, the daily schedule change (going from 50 minute classes to 60 minute classes) has lowered our available times by three hours per day. This has had an impact on the number of students we are able to serve. We will continue to monitor this.

Last, we are in the position of having students from across the curriculum visit our department. A common theme among them is that as the university moved to the 14 week semesters, the 14 credit limit, and the learning model -- they got busier. Some students who know they could benefit from strengthening their academic foundations, and want to come to the centers, feel they can't spare the time. Many tutors also feel the crunch and are unable to work as many hours, or not at all. We will continue to address this in 2008.

Accreditation Self Study of 2004 Areas of Concern

Three concerns were listed on page 58 of the 2004 Self Study. They were:

1. Poor record keeping
2. Not enough space
3. Poor alternatives for under prepared students in English 111

Since that time the following changes have taken place to help alleviate these concerns.

1. TutorTrac software has been implemented in all of the Learning Centers. Record keeping and data collection is now cleaner, simpler, and reliable.
2. Our rearranging of existing space and putting the Study Skills modules online, as described above, has helped. We have also requested more space in the budget request section of this report.
3. In Fall 2004, one FTE was hired to develop and teach English 106, a Basic Writing class for under prepared students. The English Department has the option of counseling students into English 106. However, there is no requirement.

2004 Full-Scale Evaluation Report (Visiting Evaluation Team)

On page 8 of the Full-Scale Evaluation Report, commendation #1 reads, “Academic Learning Tutors. Academic Learning employs more than 250 students. Approximately 100 are in the

field of math, with 50 in writing and 100 in general areas. The student tutors are trained in a course and nationally certified to assist students. Student tutors report acceptable pay and outstanding working conditions. Students are encouraged on multiple levels to utilize the tutoring center, and reported it as a strength in their educational experience. “

In 2007, we employed and trained over 300 tutors **each semester**. Approximately 100 in the Math center, 60 in the Reading Center, 25 in the Writing Center, 120 in the Tutoring Center, 5 in Disability Services, and 6 in the Study Skills Center.

Analysis and Appraisal / What We Have Learned

Academic Learning Department Data for 2007

These numbers represent the number of individuals coming to the Learning Centers for peer tutoring. They do NOT include the students taking classes from the department.

Total Visits	Total Hours	Different Students
84,006 visits	84,888 hours	7,996 different students

2,539 students used more than one center, but they are **not** “double counted” in the chart.

Department Goals from 2007:

All department goals were made with the three imperatives in mind. They are indicated in parenthesis after each goal as follows:

1. Serves more students
2. Improves the quality of the BYU-Idaho experience
3. Lowers the relative cost of education.

Goals were:

- 1. To improve department inservice (faculty) meetings, and increase camaraderie. (2)**
 - a. We had two department retreats at the Quick Water Ranch in Victor. These were good opportunities to discuss department and university issues in a relaxed environment. We also had Thursday inservices (department meetings) to which various guest were invited. For example we had concerns and questions regarding peer instruction, so invited Clark Gilbert to discuss peer instruction versus peer tutoring. Additionally, we initiated an informal lunch group where the department buys lunches for anyone who wants to come and sit and talk and eat and bond and enjoy each other. There were no special topics for the discussions. We just "connected."
- 2. To use our space more efficiently. (1, 2)**
 - a. As mentioned in the “significant changes” section of this report, by putting the Study Skills Modules online, the space previously used for Study Skills was made available. The Study Skills director and assistant Math Center director switched offices. The Math Center absorbed the Study Skills space. This doubled the math tutoring area. Previous to the change, math tutors were spilling over into the Tutoring and Writing Centers. By increasing the math space, the Tutoring and

Writing Centers were able to “reclaim” space that had been lost to math tutors. We are continuing to try to secure dedicated space for math one-on-one tutoring.

- 3. To have each person in the department attend one professional conference. (2)**
 - a. All but two department members attended conferences in 2007. Three members were session presenters at their respective conferences. BYU-Idaho is well respected among Academic Learning Centers across the country.
- 4. To put the study skills modules online. (1, 2, 3)**
 - a. The study skills modules were put on line in Fall 2007. It has been a great success. 360 students registered for the online modules in Fall 2007. The highest enrollment up until then was 277 in Winter 2004. It also brings the department percentage of students taking online courses to close to 20%.
- 5. To initiate an online writing tutor for international students. (1, 2)**
 - a. An online writing tutor for students with English as a foreign language was developed in Fall of 2007. This allows international students to submit papers online. They can choose one concept (articles, prepositions, agreement, etc.) to be edited. The paper is edited for that concept and sent back to the student. It is hoped that by modeling one specific concept that the students will learn and remember better. Submitting papers could become part of their “writing process”. It was piloted Fall 2007 and will be fully implemented in Winter 2008.
- 6. To secure realistic tutor wage money, and distribute it appropriately. (2)**
 - a. The university has always kindly covered our tutor wage monies. In 2007, with the combination of allotted budget and philanthropic monies we had a realistic tutor wage budget to be stewards over from the beginning of the year.
 - b. The tutor wage money was redistributed among the different centers to accurately reflect where the money is used and to give the directors more of a personal stewardship.
- 7. To improve and increase feedback from students. (2)**
 - a. The TutorTrac software program was used to send surveys to students over e-mail. These surveys are sent at various times. For example, after the first visit, at midterms, and after the last visit.
- 8. To implement the BYU-I learning model more fully. (1, 2)**
 - a. Student employees in each of the centers have been given more responsibilities. For example, each center has supervising students at the front desk to manage affairs and direct students. Each Center has created opportunities for students to be more involved with their own teaching, learning, and leading. These include positions such as supervisors, managers, newsletter editor, inservice coordinator, new tutor mentors, resource coordinator, seminar training, advertising, compiling data, etc.
- 9. To encourage group tutoring to improve sessions and save money. (1, 2, 3)**
 - a. To encourage group tutoring, the Tutoring Center has continued to offer tutors the incentive of receiving paid prep time of 10% if two students were put together in a group and 20% if three or more students were tutored together in a group. This often improves the student experience and has produced an estimated savings of \$40,146 for 2007.
- 10. To increase drop in tutoring for Math and Tutoring (1, 2, 3)**
 - a. The Math Center has doubled its drop in tutoring space. The math center is emphasizing center usage over one-on-one tutoring in order to save money and serve students better.

- b. The tutoring Center has acquired three large round tables to better provide for group tutoring. They continue to have group drop in tutoring for physics, biology, and other courses as demands require.

11. To broaden the help available for “writing across the curriculum”

- a. The Writing Center, which used to be dominated by English students seeking help, has spent a lot of time with the Education and other departments. Although English student clientele are still well represented (44%), the English Department hiring TA’s has enabled the Writing Center to broaden its “writing across the curriculum” efforts. For example, Sister Frongner in the Education Department requires all student teachers to pass through the Writing Center before they turn in their Introduction Letter to their assigned districts. The Writing Center served 607 students for a total of 889 hours from the Education Department alone in 2007. Some of the other departments which were served through the Writing Center were: Accounting (23 visits), Business (129 visits), Biology (39 visits), Child Development (77 visits), Communications (187 visits), Economics (439 visits), History (39 visits), Health Science (84 visits), Math (38 visits), Religion (83 visits), Nursing (54 visits), etc.

Teaching Quality

The overall instructor ratings and course ratings within the department are consistently above the BYU-I median on the course evaluation reports. Here are examples of student comments about teachers in the department:

1. I have loved how excited he gets about the smallest things. It helps me want to learn. You can tell that he cares not just about what he teaches, but about each student as an individual.
2. I love him!!! Best teacher I have ever had!!! He is amazing!!! Great person, great teacher.
3. My teacher rocks! He is funny. I learned a lot from him. He makes class fun for me. I look forward to going to class. The tutor also really helps each week. That’s a big part that I like. One on one help from a good tutor.

Student Trends

We do not have majors or minors in the department. The number of students using our centers has increased every year until last year. Among other things, the schedule change (3 hours a day less availability) and shortened semesters have had an affect on students. The English Department hiring its own TA’s has taken some of the students away from the Writing Center.

In the Reading Center, Second Language Speakers make up 19% of the total students, but take up 45% of the tutoring time. Of the other 55% of students, 27% are developmental, 18% are advanced, 15% are basic writing, 7% are Kurzweil users, and 13% are other.

In the Writing Center, 44% of students are from the English department. The rest are from across the curriculum.

In the Math Center , Math 101 enrollment has increased while Math 100 has stayed relatively the same. The use of the drop in math center has increased proportionate to the increased space. 4,066 different students came for tutoring in 2007.

In the Tutoring Center, the number of students dropped for the first time ever. In 2006, 4,522 different students were served. In 2007, 3,630 different students were served.

In the Study Skills Center, the number of students taking the modules has increased dramatically. We believe this is because the modules were put online.

From the Disabilities office, the increase in number of cases opened, not counting student contacts which were served without a file being opened, has doubled and continues to grow since BYU-Idaho became a 4 year institution. Assuming entry and re-entry of students from missions, military service, returning after pregnancies, work or income related issues, and etc, in any one year SSD could have over 400 active cases without considering ancillary contacts and services to other students, faculty, staff, parents, etc. In 2007, 128 new cases were opened. This is an increase of 25% from 2006.

We continue to receive reports back from students and tutors about how the department has helped them. Here are two excerpts from two notes that are representative:

From a tutor:

“Being employed at the BYU-Idaho Tutoring Center has helped me as a student and as a person in general. The principles that I was taught to be an effective tutor helps me to be more responsible in my own schoolwork and the other responsibilities that life requires. I am able to better organize my life so I have more time to do the things I need to as well as recreational and volunteer projects. Being able to tutor fellow students is very fulfilling because I am able to help my peers reach their potential. . . “

From a student:

“I wanted to send you this brief letter to return and report how things are going at BYU. I love it here. I wanted you to know that your class did impact me for good. I thank you again from the bottom of my heart for all the help and assistance you have given me; your example and sermons in class have stuck with me. I’m grateful. I got more out of your class than just help with math. I also learned about life. I finished up Math 110 after getting an A in your math 101. I actually got a B in that class and now I’m taking Math 119. I also am meeting with a tutor every week just like you made us in Math 101. Thank you for instilling that faith and hope in me. “

Major Strengths

The dedicated faculty, administrators, staff, and student employees are by far our greatest strength. They bring professional and spiritual integrity to the Academic Learning Department.

Major Weaknesses (Challenges and Recommendations)

The department is studying, planning, and working on the four challenges below. We have been in communication with several different people on campus, but have not made much progress. From our perspective, the major obstacles are the university’s own policies and limitations.

1. The pool of qualified tutors is shrinking. As departments hire TA's (i.e. English), the university creates hiring policy (i.e. no off track students), and registrar's policies are rigid (i.e. can't waive 1 credit for the training class) . . . the pool of tutors has decreased. At times, trained writing tutors are courted to take other jobs. This cripples the Writing Center because the trained assistants have traditionally been used to train new assistants. We do not want to become a training ground for English TA's. Also, as new courses are rolled out (either major courses or foundation courses) there are no students who have successfully completed the classes to hire as tutors. This is always "fixed" with time. Good students (the ones we hire as tutors) are very aware of the credit limits for graduation. They are hesitant to take the required training class because they don't want the extra credit. Being able to waive a tutor training credit at the end of a semester would keep the tutors accountable without punishing them with an unwanted credit. This request has been denied by the registrar's office. Being able to hire off track students who have already been trained would also greatly help. The investment of training is complete, they can work more hours, and be more focused. This request has been denied by student employment.
2. Space for one/on/one math tutoring is not dedicated. The Academic Learning Math Center accepted a request from the Math Department to take over tutoring of all math classes except statistics. Space was an issue for us, so this was only a temporary agreement (pilot) until space for one/on/one math tutoring could be secured permanently. So far, no space has been secured. We are on a semester by semester hunt for one/on/one tutoring space. This confuses the students and is a challenge for the department.
3. Space for group tutoring is not sufficient. As we move to more group tutoring sessions, there are not enough group tutoring areas. It would be great if some group tutoring rooms were part of the new MC addition and made available to be managed by the Academic Learning department.
4. Students with Learning Disabilities Vs Students with Limited Academic Abilities. Students accepted to the university with low ACT scores (below 16) and questionable GPA's may have limited academic abilities and not learning disabilities. At times, these students want special accommodations, but they do not qualify. This may hamper the relationship of the student and the university. In some cases, admittance to the university sets students up for failure and puts unreasonable expectations on the faculty. A set of easily accessible and clear guidelines for students and parents would improve communication before a student is placed in an uncomfortable situation. Guidelines under "Quick Links" or similar locations on the BYU-I web page would improve communication. We will continue our efforts to communicate information to perspective students and their families.

Budget Requests

SPACE REQUEST

Although the space utilization changes we made within the department are helping, we are still in need of space, and that need will grow in the future.

The Math Department asked us to take on the tutoring they were doing as a department because they felt we could do a better job. We agreed, and took on the extra tutoring. However, the extra tutoring of higher lever math classes took away space from one/one tutoring of developmental students. We currently secure one/one tutoring space semester by

semester in satellite areas (Romney, etc). It is difficult and does not give continuity to students from one semester to the next. It would serve the students better to know there was a dedicated location to meet with their tutors.

Request permanently dedicated space as close to the library as possible for one/one math tutoring. It should be in one room for the entire day.

We try never to turn a student away. In the Tutoring Center, sometimes there are no rooms and the student and tutor spend much of their time looking for a place to tutor. As a result, sometimes students are disenchanted and don't return. We can improve the quality of the students experience and serve more students by having space for them.

Request Twelve study rooms in the MC addition to be used for group tutoring purposes.

BUDGET REQUESTS FOR 2007

Future Needs Based on Use of Current Resources

The department goal regarding budget is to be prudent and work below our allotted amount. We appreciate all the support which allows us to do this.

The numbers in the following tables reflect the sum of all areas of the department.

Unit Controlled Budget

Unit Controlled Budget for 2007

Total Unit Controlled Budget	Spent	Revenue from missed tutoring charges etc.	Balance
\$33,489	\$36,212	\$9,861	\$7,138

The department stayed within its unit controlled budget.

Request the same budget adjusted for inflation. The revenue column will be less in 2008 and beyond because \$3000 of the 2007 revenue came from a textbook "mix up". That will not happen again. We also anticipate summer growth which would require a little more money in the summer.

Tutor Wage Budget

Tutor Wage Budget for 2007

Total Student Wage Budget	Spent	Transferred Back to Philanthropic Accounts at Year's End	Balance
\$442,577 (Unit Controlled Restricted) + \$105,000 (Transfers from 4150-17/4520-02) = \$547,577	\$513,932	\$33,000	\$645

The department stayed within its Student Wage Budget which consisted of unit controlled money and transfers from philanthropic accounts. \$33,000 was transferred back to the philanthropic accounts at the end of the year.

Request \$685,537 for 2009 for tutor wages.

The same budget as 2008, which is the sum of controlled restricted funds (\$574,037) and Philanthropic monies (\$111,500) for a total of \$685,537. This should be adjusted for inflation and the increase in student wages across campus. We will continue to transfer back unused money to the philanthropic account.

Travel Budget

Travel Budget for 2007

Total Travel Budget	Encumbered	Spent	Balance
\$13,254	\$2,904	\$8,369	\$1,981

Two members of the department did not travel to a conference in 2007. If they had attended a conference the end balance would have been closer to \$0. Our goal is to have everyone attend at least one conference a year. Actually, since we are teaching three semesters a year, we would like our department members to attend a conference every two semesters which would necessitate an increase in travel budget.

Request: \$15,000 professional conference travel money.

That we have \$1,500 travel money per each department member (2 are administrators, but should also attend conferences).

Minor Remodel Request

Request that two power poles be removed from the Math Center to accommodate seating and movement of tutors. These poles were used to bring power to computers when the space was Study Skills space. They are no longer needed.

Cost would be the cost of labor. It would probably take one or two hours.

Technology Budget Issues

1. Request four webcams (\$130 each) with microphones (\$100 each) and Skycap (\$50) to be used with the existing computers in the Reading Center so tutors and students can have real time conversations from outside locations.

Estimated cost is \$970.

2. Request Kurzweil update. We bought the Kurzweil upgrade in August 2007. Updates were free for one year. We will need to purchase an update in 2009.

Cost is \$1,003.

The Resource Request Summary is attached.