

Student Numeracy Assistance Centre (SNACK)

Robert McKeown[†]

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[†] Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream, York University, Department of Economics

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Abstract

SNACK provides discipline-specific ancillary support to learners enrolled in quantitative courses with high fail/drop rates such as economics. These supports are rooted in development theory and have three tiers. Tier 1 supports incoming students with a summer prep course on algebra. After classes begin, workshops on general academic and numeracy skills are delivered to international students to foster academic culture. Curated online resources are available through the SNACK website to raise awareness of useful non-course content (e.g. Excel, coding languages). Tier 2 coordinates SNACK peer tutoring with Supplemental Instruction group study sessions. These supports target historically challenging quantitative courses. Sessions are facilitated by an upper-year peer leader who attends lectures. Tier 3 supports provide just-in-time assistance to at-risk students starting with our Early Alert program that identifies at-risk students using their first-term test results. Instructors “nudge” these students to visit academic coaching for counseling and feedback. Peer-to-peer tutoring offers at-risk students the opportunity to receive 1-on-1 and small-group help specific to their course. These supports promote academic honesty while actively discouraging predatory tutoring.

The university sits in a large metropolitan area with a diverse student body. Long commutes and cultural barriers can make student engagement a challenge. The mutually reinforcing tiered supports engage students by offering more opportunities to interact with peers who are trained to help in various situations. For example, a peer leader might notice an at-risk student in a group study session and recommend they visit peer tutoring for further help or other campus resources. Communication is maintained between peer leaders, faculty, and staff through regular meetings. This provides actionable information on student needs to faculty and staff. SNACK support services aim to meet students where they are at. Success is measured with student feedback, the number of students assisted, and their ongoing performance.

1 Blah

Ancillary support free to all students to enhance success and wellbeing (equitable, inclusive). Peer tutors use active learning to help tutees by using the method of inquiry. (active learning). SNACK hires upper-year undergraduate students as peer tutors to harness their ability to help early-year students and enhance the York community. (student partners). SNACK offers both online and in-person peer tutoring to leverage technology to create resilient learning spaces (lessons from campus closures).

Multiple speakers including peer tutors (undergraduate students). Q/A period with all presenters and discussion with the audience.

2 Shortened abstract

SNACK provides discipline-specific ancillary support to learners enrolled in quantitative courses with high fail/drop rates such as economics. These supports are rooted in development theory and have three tiers. Tier 1 supports include curated online resources available through the SNACK website to raise awareness of York and non-York supported content (e.g. Excel, coding languages). Tier 2 coordinates SNACK peer tutoring with Supplemental Instruction group study sessions. These supports target historically challenging quantitative courses. Sessions are facilitated by an upper-year peer leader who attends lectures. Tier 3 includes peer-to-peer tutoring and offers at-risk students the opportunity to receive 1-on-1 and small-group instruction specific to their course. The mutually reinforcing tiered supports engage students by offering more opportunities to interact with peers who are trained to help. For example, a peer leader might recommend a student visit peer tutoring for further help or other campus resources.