



SARCNEWS

AND STRATEGIES IN RETENTION

Student Academic Resource Center Relocates to the Student Success Center

As enrollment continues to increase at the University of Central Florida, it is imperative to continue to provide academic support services and programs that can lead to academic success, persistence, and graduation. Providing academic support services for a diverse student population in an effective and efficient way can only be accomplished through collaboration.

The Student Academic Resource Center (SARC) relocated to the Student Success Center in 113 Phillips Hall in mid December 2000. The SARC staff continues to look forward to providing programs and services that help students achieve academic success. Some of these services include individual and group tutoring assistance, Supplemental Instruction, Peer Assisted Learning on-line (PALs), College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) advising and assistance, advising for the College Achievement Program and Pegasus Success Program students, and academic learning skills workshops. The SARC will continue to provide extended office hours and 24-hour service during the mid term and final exams period.



Delaine Priest
SARC Director

For the 1999-2000 academic year over 10,181 students visited the SARC. Tutoring services were provided to 4,447 students (the SARC is currently seeking National Certification of its tutoring program). The SARC supported 6 web-based courses through the PALs program and the staff provided advising appointments to 1,793 students. The SARC was open 24 hours for 8 weeks (mid-term/finals) during the fall and spring terms.

Relocation to the Student Success Center provides a centralized location on campus to better meet the needs of UCF's growing student population. The Student Success Center will also facilitate a stronger collaboration

For the 1999-2000 academic year over 10,181 students used SARC's services.

between departments to better address and resolve student issues and concerns. The SARC staff looks forward to working with faculty and staff to help better deliver services to UCF students.

For information on the SARC's services, please phone (407) 823-5130. Take a look at SARC's web site at: <http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~sarc>.

The Student Academic Resource Center provides several services and programs designed to help students earn better grades and persist to graduation. The SARC offers academic advising, tutoring, learning skills advising, the Pegasus Success Program, the College Achievement Program (CAP), CLAST advising, and the Supplemental Instruction (SI) program for better grades. SARC also trains future leaders through its SI and tutoring programs.

What is the College Achievement Program(CAP)?

A student becomes a part of the College Achievement Program (CAP) when the State Board of Education (SBE) requires him/her to enroll in college preparatory coursework. The Undergraduate Admissions Office identifies these students by their test scores from the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT). The Student Academic Resource Center (SARC) becomes the students' advising office and assists CAP students in achieving their goal of meeting the state requirements. The university works in conjunction with Valencia Community College who provides the preparatory classes and instructors on campus.

Why We Do Learning Skills Advising

SARC has a professional learning skills advisor who shows students the refinements in learning skills needed for learning at the college level. Because learning skills are not usually taught in pre-college education, many students enter UCF with a mismatch between their current study skills and the demands of college level coursework. Through one-to-one advising, workshops, and classroom presentations the learning skills advisor provides information on the refinements and modifications needed to perform well on college level studies.

Characteristics of Successful Institutions

1. Focus on the needs of their students.
2. Continually improve the quality of the educational experience.
3. Use student satisfaction assessment results to shape their future direction.

USA Group Noel-Levitz

Activities that affect retention must become as habitual to campus employees as getting a drink of water when thirsty.

Noel-Levitz

Who Should Take the College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST)?

The CLAST is an achievement test that measures students' attainment of the college-level communication and mathematics skills. The CLAST consists of four subtests:

1. Essay	2. Reading
3. English language	4. Mathematics

All students seeking an Associate of Arts or Baccalaureate degree from UCF are required by the State of Florida to satisfy the CLAST requirement. Students are eligible to take the CLAST after the completion of 18 semester hours of credit. Some students may meet the CLAST alternative criteria which is a means to satisfy the CLAST requirement. The alternative looks at SAT/ACT scores or grade point average in composition and math courses.

Students with 60 or more credit hours who have not taken the CLAST may be restricted from future registration. Students who have taken the CLAST but have not satisfied all 4 subtests of the CLAST may enroll for an additional 36 semester hours of upper-division credit. If the CLAST requirement has not been satisfied after these 36 hours have been earned, enrollment in future terms at UCF is prohibited until the CLAST requirement has been met. Any appeals to continue enrollment must be approved by the CLAST Petition Committee.

The SARC has several resources available for preparation for the CLAST. There is free math tutoring, math and reading review workshops, computer tutorials, and study manuals. The SARC also has advisors that can meet with CLAST-liable students to explain the CLAST policies, check to see if students meet the CLAST alternative criteria, and connect students to the appropriate resources. Since the beginning of the year, the SARC has received over **1089** calls in regards to the CLAST.

Come to SARC for information on the:

- CLAST alternative form
- Tutoring schedule
- SI schedule of classes and sessions
- Pegasus Success Program & CAP advising

PEGASUS SUCCESS PROGRAM: A SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAM

As admissions standards rise, UCF is forced to deny an increasing number of students. The SARC's Pegasus Success program is a summer bridge program that admits underprepared freshmen students on a conditional basis, pending the outcome of a six credit hours summer program. The program bridges the transition from high school to college, teaches the difference between high school and college expectations, articulates academic policies and requirements, and connects students to the university resources and support services.

Students are identified as candidates for the program based on standardized test scores and grade point averages slightly below the UCF cutoff. The program is offered in the six-week, summer B term, prior to the fall semester. The students must complete two pre-selected college level courses with a grade C or better in each course. In addition, they attend weekly individual advising sessions, Learning Enhancement Workshops, College Success Workshops and tutoring sessions. Once the students have successfully completed the program, they are

in the fall semester and SARC continues to advise and guide them through their freshman year.

The results demonstrate that high school grades and test scores are not the only predictors of college success. In the six years since Pegasus was first implemented, over 90% of the number of students enrolled have successfully gained regular admission to the University.

During the summer 2000, 153 students started the Pegasus Student Success Program and 89% of these students successfully completed the program. One hundred thirty one students returned fall semester and SARC individually advised 96% of those students this Fall semester.

Research on the Pegasus Success program suggests that this program really works. For example, Pegasus students have higher persistence rates to graduation and earn about the same or higher gpa's by the end of the freshmen year. This data is notable when considering that Pegasus students enter UCF with lower incoming SAT scores. In this light, one does not expect UCF Pegasus students to earn the same or ~~higher~~ gpa's than freshmen with higher SAT scores. But they do.

Term	Number of Pegasus students	Number & percent retained by the end of 1st year vs. regularly admitted summer freshmen		Entering SAT scores		Pegasus gpa vs. regularly admitted freshmen by the end of the freshman year	
		Pegasus	Summer Freshmen	Pegasus	Freshmen Summer	Pegasus	Summer Freshmen
Summer of 1995	155	108 or 70%	269 out of 384 or 70%	832	1011	2.5	2.5
Summer of 1996	92	58 or 63%	262 out of 376 or 70%	937	1022	2.6	2.7
Summer of 1997	70	51 or 73%	330 out of 439 or 75%	968	1019	3.0	2.8
Summer of 1998	196	124 or 65%	515 out of 727 or 71%	952	1012	2.9	2.7
Summer of 1999	153	134 or 88%	740 out of 979 or 77%	952	1028	2.7	2.6

THE SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION (SI) EFFECT

Too many students enter college with high SAT scores and high school GPA's but still lack the thinking and study skills to accurately portray their intelligence. UCF is fortunate to have SI which is one of 2 retention programs certified by the U. S. Department of Education as an Exemplary Educational Program. This means that SI was proven to actually increase grades and retention.



Dennis Congos,
SI Coordinator

UCF has had an SI program since 1996 when there were 2 classes with SI support. This past fall semester 2000, 24 sections of classes in biology, chemistry, economics, microbiology, math, and physics had SI support.

The SI program model is based on the learning theories of Piaget, Dewey, and Bruner. As a result, students who participate in the SI program enjoy the benefits of collaboration, peer cooperation and support, study skills in notetaking, textbook reading, concentration,

test preparation, testtaking, time management, etc. In this manner, students acquire and refine the skills for learning and move toward the SI goal of creating independent learners.

SI focuses on historically difficult or high-risk courses and not on high-risk students. A student is hired who has had this course before and has earned an "A" in it. After extensive training, this student, called an SI leader, attends class, takes notes, reads all assignments, and does the homework. The SI leader holds 3-4 SI sessions per week where they focus on communicating the latest in effective study skills for learning the material in the high-risk class. Students cooperate to build complete and accurate lecture notes, complete and accurate solutions

to problems, formulate potential exams questions and answers, tackle sample tests, and exchange information on effective learning skills. At appropriate times, SI leaders distribute "how-to" handouts on college level learning skills that are effective for understanding and learning difficult material. Below are some examples of final grade

SI supported 41 classes and over 2076 students participated in SI sessions at UCF in 1999-2000

Class	SI Final Grade Average	Non-SI Final Grade Average
General Biology	3.1 = B	2.0 = C
Organic Chemistry I	2.2 = C	1.4 = D
Concepts of Chemistry	3.0 = B	2.3 = C
Macro Economics	3.2 = B	2.0 = C
Microbiology	3.4 = B	2.7 = C
Human Anatomy	3.0 = B	2.1 = C
Physical Science	2.5 = C	1.6 = D
Chemistry Fundamentals for Engineers	3.8 = A	2.1 = C

SARC's Open 24 Hours

The SARC is open 24-hours per day before mid-term and final exams. Contact the SARC for specific dates. During this time, SARC provides:

- An academic setting for studying.
- A place for study groups to meet.
- Computer access for preparing papers and reports, e-mail access, and access to vital information on the information KIOSK.
- Tutoring services (Check the tutor schedule for hours).

Common Retention Myths

1. Increasing retention means lowering standards.
2. Retention improves without changing organizational behavior.
3. Students bring an understanding of what it takes to succeed in college.
4. Only academic preparedness equates to persistence to graduation in college.
5. Finances, work, and/or family are the sole reasons students drop out.

USA Group Noel-Levitz

What Does Retention Mean?

Some of the research presented may be startling in terms of what is found to work to increase retention but one theme is ever-present: ***the fewer faculty and staff who participate in retention efforts, the worse is retention.*** That includes simple activities that range from simple greetings and friendliness toward students to the large programs proven to increase student success and persistence.

According to 23 years of research from the Noel-Levitz Retention Research Group (with over 600 on-campus consultations and 97 National Retention Excellence Award winning programs) ***retention is not a goal!*** Noel-Levitz's two most significant discoveries in the past 10 years of research appear to be contrary to many notions of what reduces attrition:

1. ***"The dropout-proneness of entering students is more a function of attitude and motivation than academic credentials."***
2. ***".....there is a big difference between academic preparedness and being ready to persist and succeed academically."***

It has been traditional to view attrition as the outcome of poor academic preparation skills. Discovery #1 suggests while academic preparedness is essential, it may also be productive to look at services and programs that address the role of motivation and attitudes in the educational experience. Discovery #2 emphasizes that it is to revise traditional views of academic preparedness and examine internal factors affecting retention beyond application

Good Things To Know About Tutoring

SARC is the place when students need a tutor. The great thing about this is that many UCF students have already figured this out. Fall 2000 turned out to be a banner semester for the SARC's tutoring program. There was tutorial assistance in nearly 40 content areas including accounting, chemistry, physics and statistics. A total of 21 tutors tutored over 2900 students!

Dedication, talent and training combine to make the SARC's tutors extraordinary people. Tutors must have an overall GPA of 3.0, must have a "B" or better in the course(s) they are tutoring, and must attend monthly on-going training sessions. The fall 2000 tutoring staff included: Leo Anglero, LiLiana Bailey, Anne Sophie Berthaud, Natalie Dopson, Charles Favreau, Kent Lamers, Katie Longway, Dean Moniz, Jennifer Montgomery, Michael Minardi, Brandy Parker, Shea Phillips, David Radzicz, Yuya Tanahashi, and Audra Willsey. Coleen Hassell and Sheree Strampach are the tutor coaches who assist with training and evaluation.

Interactive Study Sessions for Athletes (ISS)


Student athletes face tremendous pressures such as workout schedules, practice times, games, traveling, AND going to class. To provide support for student athletes as they strive to be successful in the classroom, the SARC has partnered with the Office of Academic Support for Student Athletes (ASSA) to facilitate Interactive Study Sessions (ISS). Unlike other universities that send their athletes to study tables (where they sit for extended periods of time with no help or direction), UCF provides an opportunity for small groups of athletes to interact with tutors in a structured setting. Tutors help athletes refine study skills essential skills for learning and exam preparation. Subject areas include: CLAST, sociology, psychology, and physical science.

ISS tutors also must meet minimum GPA requirements and have excellent communication skills. The tutors for fall semester: Leo Anglero, Darrin Crovitz, Charles Favreau, Rod Gordon,

SARC Student Advisory Council

This year marks the inception of new goal. The SARC Student Advisory Council is now a reality. The group first met in September and began creating the important role they will fill at the SARC. The functions of the group are to: provide student feedback about programs, serve as SARC ambassadors at University functions, and provide a link to the community through community outreach projects. This year's members are: Gena Alusio, Jeff Draude, Mileidy Guerrero, Alex Nottingham, Bradley Reed, Nishla Sobers, Yuya Tanahashi, and Audra Willsey.

Excerpt on Retention

A national survey looked at elements required for *student satisfaction* with their institution of choice in higher education. The National Center for Retention examined the expectations of students as *“consumers who have a choice about whether or not to invest in education at a particular institution as well as having definite expectations about what they want from their college experience.”* When these expectations were met or exceeded, students were satisfied and much more likely to re-enroll in subsequent semesters. More in the next issue on what are these expectations. 



The 2000-2001 SARC Staff:


- **DeLaine Priest**
SARC Director
- **Christy Sidhu**
CLAST/Pegasus Advisor
- **Lynne Branham**
Coordinator of Learning Support
- **Dennis Congos**
SI Coordinator & Learning Skills Advisor
- **Tynika Williams**
GA CAP Advisor
- **Kelly Sullivan**
CAP Advisor
- **Mercedes Ramirez**
Program Assistant
- **Jennie McCrone**
Office Manager

Phone: 407-823-5130
113 Phillips Hall

Faculty/Student Interaction That Increases Retention

When faculty and administrators show they care, students who want to be cared about attend that institution. When faculty and administrators show they don't care, students who don't want to be cared about attend that institution. How many students do not want faculty and administrators to show they care about them?

These elements in faculty/student interaction increase retention and are directly related to the affective (as opposed to cognitive) domain of student development. Since *unmet affective needs compose the top 3 reasons why students leave an institution*, a faculty member that demonstrates caring will have an enormous effect on retention when they incorporate these ideas below into interaction with students.

1. **Learn the name of each student as quickly as possible and use it in class.** It creates a safer, friendlier atmosphere in the classroom:
 - a. Call on students by their first names.
 - b. But be flexible and call on students using whatever address they prefer: first or nickname, Mr., Mrs., Ms.....
2. **Tell students how you prefer to be addressed** (Prof., Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms, 1st name, nick name).
3. **Before class begins, walk around and personally introduce yourself to individual students.** Ask them their major, do they have any questions, etc.
4. **In addition to returning tests, quizzes, themes in class, sometimes ask students to stop by your office to pick them up.** This is an opportunity to talk informally.
5. **Clearly lay out standards for grading** on the 1st day of class and in the syllabus.
6. **Be open-minded with exam questions.** Students may not interpret words the same 

SARC Web Site:
<http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~sar>