ANNUAL REPORT

2015 2016

Division of Student Affairs
Center for Academic Success
MISSION to promote self-efficacy and lifelong learning by empowering individuals with transformational strategies and resources that foster critical thinking and metacognitive development in order to advance student persistence and success.

The Center for Academic Success received 72,000 visits from students in 2015/16.
The LSU Center for Academic Success (CAS), LSU's primary learning center, serves all University students. The Center inspires and empowers individuals with innovative education strategies by encouraging active learning and critical thinking through metacognitive development – the fundamental foundation for all services and resources provided by the Center. The CAS encourages students to embrace learning as an active, ongoing process that promotes growth in their academic and personal lives.

Metacognitive strategies, self-assessments, and developing the skill set and mindset needed to remain engaged helps students achieve academic, professional and personal success as they transform into independent, lifelong learners, critical thinkers and problem solvers, with the ability to make an impact on their communities, states and the nation.

Working with the CAS transforms students. The process equips them with the necessary tools to develop critical thinking skills, build self-confidence and improve metacognition. Ultimately, students who take advantage of the CAS support and resources improve their academic confidence, increase their academic performance, persist in their majors of choice, at the University, and graduate on time. With improved confidence, performance, retention, and timely graduation, students maintain scholarships and financial aid, obtain prime employment opportunities and enter into professional or graduate-level programs ready to succeed.

During the 2015-2016 academic year, the CAS recorded a major achievement through national recognition by the National College Learning Center Association (NCLCA). NCLCA certified the LSU CAS a Learning Center of Excellence, a competitive designation bestowed on centers which develop, maintain and assess quality programs and services that enhance student learning; exceed standards of excellence for learning centers; and possess an established history of excellence. During this year, the CAS also maintained overall student interaction through visit totals, but with a marked increase of more than 25 percent in the Supplemental Instruction (SI) program.

The following pages expand on highlighted accomplishments from three main areas within the CAS:

- Academic Support
- Academic Empowerment
- Center Advancement

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ACADEMIC SUPPORT

The CAS Academic Support Unit offers free content/course-based academic support services to help students persist in a timely manner in their major of choice. Tutoring (in person or online) and Supplemental Instruction (SI) provide students with the support they need to increase their performance in specific courses.

In the 2015-2016 year, the Center

- Expanded the SI program, specifically in humanities and social science courses
- Implemented a new SI attendance system
- Implemented an SI/Tutor Leadership Breakfast
- Revised time management modules
- Hired new personnel for Distributed Learning, Peer-led Learning and Graduate Assistant support
- Increased faculty participation by creating the Faculty Partners program
The Shell Tutorial Center is a drop-in service with tutoring, homework assistance, test preparation, and study strategies in various business, foreign language, humanities, social sciences, and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)-related courses on an individual or small group basis. Peer tutors, certified by the College Reading and Learning Association, provide homework assistance. Tutors use the most up-to-date, research-based techniques to heavily emphasize critical thinking principles, allowing students to apply these newly learned skills to all disciplines within the university. As a result of the training and experience, tutors themselves improve their understanding and performance in the disciplines they teach.

Online tutoring is available as a complementary or backup tutorial service, 24/7 through Smarthinking, supported by the Student Technology Fee. This service allows students access to quality tutorial services during peak study times and when the Shell Tutorial Center is closed. Additionally, the CAS connects students with Tutoring Matching service, where students can hire their own private tutor.
A series of weekly study group sessions offered for students in historically challenging courses, SI sessions are guided by a trained peer SI leader who has previously taken the course. SI leaders attend class, work closely with instructors and conduct learning sessions to further explain courses to help students improve their learning, understanding and performance. SI leaders are trained to provide effective techniques to foster critical thinking and learning.

Can lead to a **0.5 point** GPA increase

**Supplemental Instruction**

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<td>35,473</td>
<td>44,439</td>
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25% increase
The CAS Academic Empowerment unit offers a number of free programs and services, grounded in research-based metacognitive principles that encourage students to reach their fullest personal and academic potential by improving their academic performance, critical thinking skills and self-efficacy.

In the 2015-2016 year, the CAS
- Instituted a new Student Advisory Board
- Created a new online platform, the Virtual Learning Center
- Increased college relations and collaboration through the College Liaison program
- Participated in the Graduate School Information Fair
The CAS provides Academic Coaching for students, where they can discuss their personalized scores on learning diagnostics, and develop a learning plan that is unique to their strengths and challenges. Coaches introduce students to metacognitive learning strategies that elevate thinking to the college level. Consultants may provide additional ongoing support for students who attend a workshop on topics such as goal setting, exam and assignment preparation, motivation, and stress and time management.

Students in STEM graduate at a higher rate with these programs

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<th>CAS service used</th>
<th>% higher graduation rate</th>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Coaching</td>
<td>9% higher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tutoring</td>
<td>17% higher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supplemental Instruction</td>
<td>34% higher</td>
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Average 20% higher grad rates
2009 cohort

“...[Academic coaching] helped me get a better understanding of how to personally approach my own studies.”

– M.S., Student
The CAS provides a series of workshops designed to help students improve their overall academic performance. Workshops occur throughout the semester for all students and upon request for organizations, faculty, and staff.

**IMPACT**

The two-hour program, offered in the spring semester, helps first-year students transition to college-level learning by teaching them transformational strategies such as critical thinking, time management and stress reduction to improve academic performance. Results show that high-risk students who attend IMPACT double their chances of returning to LSU and obtain an average of a 0.5 increase in their GPA.
By integrating sound, metacognitive learning strategies into teaching practices, faculty development programs are offered to increase student learning in the classroom. Our Faculty Partners collaborate with the CAS in a program that encourages the adoption of active and engaging teaching practices to improve student learning.

**Faculty Partners**

- **Accounting** .......................................................... Janice Holmes
- **Biology** .............................................................. Steven Pomarico
- **Chemistry** .......................................................... Elzbieta Cook
- **Communication Disorders** .................................. Yunjung Kim
- **Economics** ......................................................... Doug Weimer
- **Geography/Anthropology** ................................. Mary Jill Brody
- **History** ............................................................... Maribel Dietz
- **Math** ................................................................. Julia Ledet
- **Physics** .............................................................. Dalgis Mesa
- **Psychology** ......................................................... Matthew Calamia
- **Sociology** ........................................................... Heather Rackin

**CLASSROOM PRESENTATIONS**

The CAS offers classroom and group presentations upon request. This program allows faculty to request CAS curricular inclusion presentations to teach metacognitive strategies to increase learning and performance. Additionally, CAS customizes presentations to fit the needs of each group, including Greek organizations, residential halls and pre-college programs.
Transition Programs

CAS works with the College of Science and Engineering to target STEM attrition by providing course-level interventions to help students successfully complete key courses. CAS also provides support for boot camps and other programs offered by campus departments.

Online Resources

Students have access to numerous online resources through the CAS website. They include videos, worksheets and assessments from the Virtual Learning Center and online tutoring from SmarThinking.

The CAS website, lsu.edu/cas, boasts many helpful strategic learning resources and is an integral part of CAS outreach to students, professionals and institutions. The site contains many original and adapted tools such as the Study Cycle, the Study Group Starter Kit, the Semester Calendar, tutorials, learning assessments, complete workshops, tip sheets (available online to print), and videos.
The CAS Center Advancement unit provides support and services geared toward improving the overall delivery of services and progressing college learning at LSU and beyond. This unit includes technology and data operations, marketing and communications, research, operational excellence, strategic planning, assessment, and evaluation.

In the 2015-2016 year, the CAS
• Received certification from the National College Learning Center Association (NCLCA) as a Learning Center of Excellence.
• Received the Innovation and Assessment Awards presented by the Division of Student Affairs.
• Implemented a new Academic Center Management Software System.
• Increased data collection and analysis.
• Collaborated with other campus units to apply for national grants such as Project RISE.
• Enhanced fund development through on and off campus donations from the University.
• Increased participation in the learning center community through service on the NCLCA board (Melissa Brocato, NCLCA Marketing and Communication Chair).
• Adopted a new vision statement.

Outreach

The Center for Academic Success also participates in numerous outreach activities and events and participates in events held by other departments.
FISCAL CONTRIBUTORS

• Shell Oil • President's Office • Student Affairs • Auxiliary Services • Dining Services • SMARTThinking
• Student Technology Fee Oversight Committee • Academic Affairs • Wiley Publishing
• McGraw Hill Publishing • E.J. Ourso College of Business • College of Science • College of Humanities & Social Sciences
• University College • Kelley Family •