Conclusions

LASSO Peer Tutoring: A Holistic Approach to Academic Support
Authors: Susan Malec and Mike Seaman

The LASSO Center

The LASSO Center is dedicated to helping all Oklahoma State University students succeed as they transition into college and throughout their college experience. LASSO’s goal is to ensure the academic success of all OSU students by:

• Assisting students who are underprepared for the demands of the university experience to become well prepared;
• Assisting well prepared students to advance in their studies;
• Assisting students who are advanced in their studies to achieve academic excellence.

Our staff works to empower students to take an active role in

• Assisting students who are advanced in their studies to

• and throughout their college experience.

The LASSO Center is dedicated to helping all Oklahoma State campus needing assistance. Qualified tutors meet GPA and increments. Students may request up to seven hours of identified. Tutoring appointments are scheduled in one hour provide alternative options if a suitable tutor can't be

Center.

Though tutoring isn't always available for every course on campus, the LASSO staff will gladly work to find a tutor or

which they are currently enrolled.

Courses. Students may request tutoring for any course in

Center staff. The center offers tutoring for more than 400

LASSO Peer Tutoring

The LASSO Center's Paul Milburn Tutoring Program is a service offering free one-on-one tutoring to any student on campus needing assistance. Qualified tutors meet GPA and course content standards. Tutors are approved by the LASSO Center staff. The center offers tutoring for more than 400 courses. Students may request tutoring for any course in which they are currently enrolled. Though tutoring isn't always available for every course on campus, the LASSO staff will gladly work to find a tutor or provide alternative options if a suitable tutor can't be identified. Tutoring appointments are scheduled in one hour increments. Students may request up to seven hours of tutoring per week.

The LASSO Center also offers walk-in tutoring in partnership with residential life through the Academic Development Center.

Midterm Grades as Predictors

Philip A. Jensen and James N. Barron (2014) found in their study that midterms grades were a reliable predictor for course outcomes, finding across academic that disciplines, that nearly 60% of students will finish with the same grade at midterms as their final course outcome. This outcome sparked interest in LASSO’s students’ performance from midterm to final grades.

Within the LASSO Center, all of the tutors are College Reading & Learning Association (CRLA) International Tutor Training Program Certified. CRLA serves as a benchmark and a standard for excellent tutor training programs around the globe. The certification process sets an internationally accepted standard of skills and training for tutors. CRLA certifies tutor training programs, like the LASSO Center, which can recognize the tutors who have met all of the requirements of their tutoring program. The general requirements that tutor training programs must demonstrate are: sound tutoring practices, planned training experiences, direct tutor experience and regular evaluations.

The LASSO Center maintains high hiring standards by verifying through course transcripts that all tutors hired have an A or a B in the content area to be tutored. In addition to transcript verification, recommendations need to be gathered from a tutor faculty member, department head or university supervisor. The goal from the recommendation is to gather information on whether the tutor-candidate has the temperament to tutor effectively. All tutor-candidates go through an interview process. Once tutors are hired, they go through an extensive training process. Once hired, LASSO tutors have ten hours of required training. The training consists of online trainings for FERPA and Title VII & IX. There is a one day training in the form of workshops and seminars. This day of training is led by student leaders and is interactive in nature. The content of the training day is determined by CRLA-recommended topics. The topics that are taught on training days are: the definition of tutoring and tutor responsibilities; basic tutoring guidelines; techniques for successfully beginning and ending a tutor session; learning styles; handling difficult students; role modeling; goal setting; communication skills; active listening; referral skills; study skills; critical thinking skills; compliance with the ethics and philosophy of the LASSO Center; modeling problem solving. In addition to hiring criteria, and a well-designed training system, CRLA requires tutors to gain experience tutoring students as part of their development.

These graphs show the improvement and decline in courses that reported midterm grades among students who engaged in LASSO tutoring.

• The left side of each graph shows the whole number of students who either maintained (grey), improved (green), or declined (mustard) in their grades during the academic year (the charts are arranged in descending order, from academic years 2017-18 to 2014-15).
• While the right side of the graph presents the same information represented in the percentage of each midterm grade’s final outcome. The graph directly below contains comprehensive data regarding midterm to final grade outcomes over the four academic years studied.
• The ultimate results show that LASSO's model results in students improving nearly 35% of the time or maintaining their grades in 48% of all cases. More than 57% of instances were a student who held an F or D as a midterm grade improved to an A, B, or C for their final grade in the course. 85% of courses were completed with an A, B, or C, with students having below those grades in 32% of instances at midterms.

Limitations

This study is non-scientific and is only a look at results among students who utilize LASSO peer tutoring services. These graphs do not take into account when a student began seeing LASSO tutoring for support in their course(s) with reported midterm grades. The study is also not aware of what percentage of the grades were disbursed at the time of midterm grades from course to course. It also does not take into account how many appointments were attended per course or individual student.

Certifications

These preliminary results suggest that the LASSO peer tutoring model of individualized attention with elite performing and well-trained peer staff, acts a viable and strong ally for students and departments in maintaining and increasing academic performance.

Citations


CRLA website, https://www.crla.net/

LASSO Website, https://universitycollege.okstate.edu/lasso/

Contact LASSO

LASSO Center
021 Classroom Building
405-744-5333
lasso.okstate.edu

Susan Malec, Coordinator of LASSO Tutoring
023 Classroom Building
405-744-5020
susan.malec@okstate.edu

Mike Seaman, Assistant Director of the LASSO Center
018 Classroom Building
405-744-2449
mike.seaman@okstate.edu