



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
STUDENT ACADEMIC RESOURCE CENTER

THE SARC TIMES

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SARC CELEBRATES 15 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE!

This year, SARC celebrated its 15th year anniversary of providing excellent academic support services to UCF students and the surrounding community. The Student Academic Resource Center (SARC) started in 1989 under the leadership of Dr. Mary Helen Callarman. The UCF tutoring program and academic workshops were the first innovative programs implemented at SARC. In 1995, the nationally-recognized Pegasus Success Program was established, and in 1996, SARC started the Supplemental Instruction (SI) Program.

For years, SARC's student-oriented philosophy and quality academic support services were well-known on campus. SARC's services became even more popular among students when the main door was painted red to draw attention to the center.

SARC relocated to the Student Success Center in Howard Phillips Hall in December of 2000. SARC continues to provide high-quality academic support programs, including tutoring, Supplemental Instruction (SI), academic advising programs, and various other programs and services to UCF students to support the goal of providing a quality education at the University of Central Florida. SARC has played an important role in the retention of students. In the Fall of 2002, SARC and the University Testing Center (UTC) joined to provide comprehensive testing and academic support services to UCF students and the metropolitan community.

During the 2002-2003 academic year, SARC had a **55% increase** in contacts with

students through services such as tutoring, supplemental instruction, and academic success workshop programs. During the Fall of 2003, over 11,769 students visited SARC. Tutoring services were provided to over 4,500 students and 7,804 students attended SI sessions.

SARC's 15th year celebration included activities such as National Tutoring Week, "Exploring your future" Lawton Chiles Middle School teach-in, a fundraiser for the Salvation Army (336.47 dollars raised), and a book drive for the UCF Creative School.

SARC closed its 15th anniversary celebration with a ceremony and reception held on April 7, 2004 at the Student Union. UCF faculty, administrators, staff, student assistants, peer tutors, and SI leaders attended the event. Dr. Thomas Huddleston, Vice President for Student Development and Enrollment Services, addressed the attendees. Honored for their support in the development of SARC programs were Patricia Pates, Kathy Mardirosian, Dr. Charles Negy, Dr. Glenn Cunningham, Dr. Maribeth Ehasz, and Dr. William Callarman. The program closed with remarks from SARC director DeLaine Priest, who provided a vision for SARC's future development as an excellent center for academic support programs.

"An excellent foundation was established in 1989. As we look toward the future, SARC will continue to provide quality programs and services to UCF students."

- DeLaine Priest

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Left to right: DeLaine Priest (Director of SARC) and Dr. Thomas Huddleston (Vice President of SDES), honor Dr. William Callarman (Professor).

SARC TUTORING – THE BEST IN THE BUSINESS

Each semester, SARC is proud to offer free tutorial services to UCF undergraduate students. What makes SARC's tutorial services the best in the business? It is the personal, hands-on exchange that occurs between a tutor and a student. SARC hires 25-30 qualified tutors each semester to assist students with further comprehension and understanding of presented course material and in developing appropriate learning strategies for academic success. SARC tutors are carefully selected based on their academic performance in the subject area they wish to tutor, a letter of recommendation from a faculty member at UCF, and completion of an interview with the Assistant Director.

Another reason SARC tutors are the best in the business is the intensive and interactive training they receive through the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) tutor training certification program. Each semester, tutors are required to complete a level of CRLA training with the goal of receiving master tutor certification. Training topics include creative communication, dynamics of

group tutoring, student academic empowerment, diversity, assisting students with learning disabilities, motivation and goal setting.

SARC tutors offer tutorial assistance in subject areas including accounting, economics, statistics, chemistry, biology, physics, and foreign language. They also provide final review sessions during the last week of classes and through finals week. Faculty members are encouraged to promote the use of tutorial assistance on a regular basis. Students who participate in a tutorial session at least two hours a week for the entire semester should be able to accomplish their academic goal of a "B" or "A". SARC can provide professors with weekly/monthly reports which include the number of students who attended tutoring sessions.

Are SARC tutors busy? Yes, they are! During the 2002-2003 academic year, SARC provided tutorial services

for 7,906 students and, during the most recent fall 2003 semester, SARC provided tutorial services for over 4,500 students. Stop by Howard Phillips Hall, room 115 to see these amazing tutors in action!



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ACADEMIC SUCCESS WORKSHOP SERIES – EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR OWN EDUCATION

SARC prides itself on sending a message to UCF students about taking charge of their academic learning. Many first-time-in-college and even some transfer students have a difficult time adjusting to the rigors of academic responsibilities at the college level. To assist student in making this transition, SARC provides a semester workshop series devoted to improving learning and study skill techniques.

These academic success workshop

series include discussion, assessments, and hands-on activities related to time management, goal setting, motivation, power studying, test-taking skills, stress management, memory and concentration, and preparation for final exams.

Faculty members have used these workshops as part of their curriculum in their classes. Those interested in a study skills workshop for their classes can contact SARC at 407-823-5130.

The Fall 2004 academic workshop schedule is available on page 6.

SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION: THE “KEY” TO HIGHER GRADES

Today, more and more students are admitted to college with high GPA's and SAT scores, but lacking learning and critical thinking skills to succeed in college-level courses. This problem exacerbates in difficult academic courses and in large classes where the pace is faster and contact with the instructor is minimal. Supplemental Instruction (SI) is here to fill this gap. SI has been proven to be successful in increasing student academic performance and retention.

For eight years, the SI program at UCF has had a great impact in improving grades and student retention. The SI program currently serves students who take historically difficult academic courses such as General Chemistry I and II, Organic Chemistry I and II, Biochemistry, Genetics, General Biology, Physics I, Physical Science, College Algebra, and Geology. These courses are considered historically difficult because 30% or more students obtain D's, F's, and W's. During the fall semester of 2003, twenty-one class sections received SI support.

Supplemental Instruction (SI) uses regularly scheduled study sessions led by peers called SI leaders. SI leaders have previously taken the course and received an “A”. They undergo continuous training in proactive strategies to conduct effective SI sessions. SI leaders attend all classes, take notes, and do all the assignments. They conduct 4 SI sessions each week. During these sessions, SI leaders help students apply study strategies to the course content.

The SI model is inspired on the theories of Piaget, Dewey, and Bruner based on the idea that students can construct their own knowledge from previous knowledge and new experiences through collaboration, social interaction, exploration and application. In this manner, SI leaders

help students work cooperatively using the textbook, lecture notes, and other materials to build accurate information, solve problems, work on sample tests and predict exam questions and answers. SI leaders do not relecture but create a comfortable atmosphere for teamwork and group study and models effective study habits. In SI sessions, students learn how to integrate course content and study skills while working together.

SI sessions are voluntary, anonymous, and free to all students enrolled in courses that offer SI. Students who attend SI have a wide range of academic backgrounds and ability. Because of this, no remedial stigma is attached for attending SI. Research shows that students who attend SI sessions on a regular basis can earn on an average one half to a full letter grade higher than their peers who do not attend SI. Some examples of final grade differences from this past fall of 2003 were as follows:

Course	Average Final Grade	
	SI	Non-SI
General Biology	B	C
Chemistry I	C	D
Organic Chemistry II	C	D
College Algebra	B	C
Geology	C	D

The benefits of SI extend to faculty members. Having group study time outside the classroom generates more academically prepared students who can meet the expectations of the instructor and make class discussions more interesting. As more students experience academic success, there will be higher student satisfaction, which translates in better evaluations for the course and the professor.

QUOTES FROM STUDENTS WHO ATTENDED SI LAST FALL

“In SI, we break the lecture material down in a way I can understand more easily.”

“The SI leader never gives answers but helps us get to the answers.”

“Without SI, I would've dropped the class. I went from a 73 on the first test to a 92 on the second test as a result of attending SI: two letter grades higher! And the second test was harder.”

“I learned how to study chemistry more effectively.”

SARC Opens 24 Hours!!!

SARC is open 24 hours a day during final exams week. This spring semester, SARC opened from Sunday, April 18, at 5:00 p.m. through Friday, April 23, until 5:00 p.m. Students had the opportunity to attend extra review sessions for specific courses, tutoring services, open lab with study areas, computer access, and facilities to form study groups.

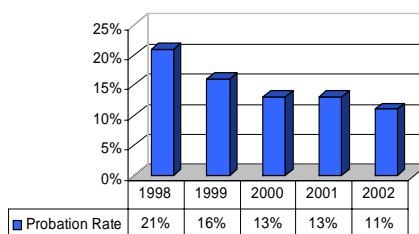
ACADEMIC PROBATION: HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN TO ME?

Most high school students do not anticipate the degree of academic difficulty that they will face in college courses, and consequently many of them are placed on probation. In 1998, the probation rate for first-time-in-college students (FTIC's) at the University of Central Florida exceeded 21%. The university faced a challenge to meet the needs of this targeted population. Therefore, a framework was developed and the Probation Intervention Program was established.

The Probation Intervention Program actively seeks to reach out and assist FTIC students placed on probation. The program consists of numerous academic success opportunities, including academic advising and workshops, and links those students placed on probation to campus resources and college advisors. The Student Academic Resource Center

(SARC) coordinates this program in collaboration with First Year Advising and Exploration, Multicultural Academic Student Services, and Academic Services for Student Athletes. Since the program was established, the probation rate for FTIC's has demonstrated a yearly decrease, as shown in the chart below.

Probation Rate for UCF FTIC Students (1998-2002)



Various program changes have been implemented over the past six years. The components of the program for the

2003-2004 academic year included the following: students were mandated to complete a student self-assessment survey on WebCT and meet with their academic advisor. Student also had an opportunity to enroll in a three-credit SLS 1501 elective course, Strategies for College Success. A series of academic success workshops were also developed for students.

The probation rate for FTIC's at the end of the Fall 2003 term was 10%, a decrease of over 50% from 1998 when the program was established. SARC will continue to explore programming and interventions that can assist this population in achieving academic success.

SI LEADERS' STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

Being an effective SI leader requires skills beyond just knowing content. One of the tasks of SI leaders is to help students acquire effective techniques for learning and understanding the course content. SI leaders are successful at learning because they have been able to implement strategies to take personal control of their own learning. They establish goals and plan for how they will prepare for exams. SI leaders continuously monitor their understanding by self-testing. They use a variety of learning strategies, decide which ones are the most effective and change study behaviors that don't work. They are in charge of their learning regardless of the difficulty of the course, quality of the instruction, quality of the textbooks, or number of exams scheduled for the same week. This is what some authors call "self-regulation" or "self-regulatory learning" (Dembo &

Seli, 2004). SI leaders model the behaviors of a self-regulatory learner during SI sessions.

Below are some of the learning strategies SI leaders use for their own learning and weave into the content during SI sessions:

Veronica Kent – Geology

"The strategies that best relate to my own study habits are: organize the information and associate ideas. These strategies are the exact tools I use to learn in my classes. I first reread my notes and look over the text. As I do this I organize the information. I then try to associate the new material to what I already know (this makes new material easy to remember)."

Raul Badillo – Biology

"When it comes to studying for

classes, I'm a big fan of mnemonics and use them regularly when trying to remember a sequence of events or a group of terms that are somehow related. I often make my students come up with their own mnemonic aids and besides learning the course material they seem to find each others mnemonics humorous. I also encourage students to study everyday and avoid procrastination. It works for me."

Sergio Figueroa – Physics

"I recommend students to eat well and get enough sleep, practice self-testing, and get actively involved with the material. I pretty much incorporate these strategies in order. I work with what I just learned and try to apply my newly acquired knowledge to make sure I know it inside and out."

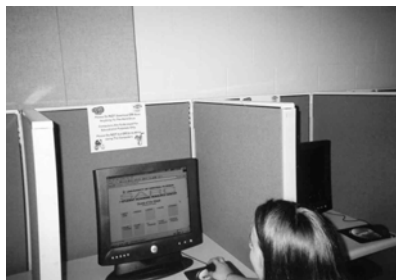
Dembo, H. & Seli, H.P. (2004, Spring). Students' resistance to change in learning strategies courses. *Journal of Developmental Education*, 27, 3.

UNIVERSITY TESTING CENTER EXPANDS ITS SERVICES

The University Testing Center (UTC) is now offering expanded services to UCF students. The UTC offers a variety of paper-and-pencil and computer-based standardized and national testing services, including: the College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Florida Teacher Certification Examinations (FTCE), Foreign Language Proficiency (FLPE), Grammar Proficiency Exam (GPE), College Placement Test (CPT), and Residual ACT.

During the Fall semester of 2004, the UTC administered 5,813 tests. The testing facility for computer adaptive

tests is equipped with 29 computers. With more tests becoming computer adaptive, the UTC is excited about the possibility of continuing to



enhance its services to meet the needs of students.

The UTC is now better able to

effectively address the needs of students by extending test administration hours to include weekday evenings, and a select Saturday each month.

For the Summer semester, the UTC Centralized Registration Office is open for registration and general inquiries Mondays and Thursdays from 8AM to 8PM, and Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 8AM to 5PM. Testing services are available by appointment only. For more information about testing, or to schedule an appointment, students should visit the UTC in Howard Phillips Hall, room 106, or call 407-823-5109.

THE PEGASUS SUCCESS PROGRAM GETS TECH SAVVY

The Pegasus Success Program is getting technology savvy. Not only is the nationally acknowledged summer bridge program using technology via a new user-friendly website, but it will be implementing new technology this summer. Pegasus students are required to take two college level courses over the Summer B semester, and of the six courses available to them, three are the auditorium style courses General Psychology, General Sociology and American National Government. With attendance playing a major part in the Pegasus program (*the fourth absence from any combination of classes, seminars, workshops, tutoring sessions, Writing Center consultations, or Supplemental Instruction sessions equals denied admission for the fall 2004 term*) collecting attendance rosters accurately in the larger classes can prove quite a challenge.

For the first time since the Pegasus Success Program began in 1998, attendance takers in the aforementioned larger classes will be

aided by a card reading machine. Pegasus students will be required to have their UCF ID with them at all times, and will swipe their card through mobile card readers at the start of class. The data is then downloaded from the machines daily, and attendance lists are printed to track students' attendance patterns. This exciting new effort is a result of a partnership between the Pegasus Success Program and Housing and Residence Life.

And there's more... Advising is also hi-tech now, with the two Pegasus summer advisors on-location with laptops, situated at the Nike building in the Academic Village, where Pegasus students will be housed this summer. This new initiative is part of a continued effort to create and sustain learning communities amongst the Pegasus students.

One of the advantages of the Pegasus Success Program is the individual academic support and

advising Pegasus students receive throughout their freshman year. In addition, starting college during the summer allows students to become familiar with a large university. Pegasus students learn their way around campus, get to know professors and academic advisors, and become familiar with campus resources within the framework of a smaller, more personable community.

How does a student become a Pegasus Student? Admission into UCF is becoming more competitive and is limited by space availability. A Pegasus student's GPA or SAT/ACT scores are below this year's eligibility criteria needed for regular fall admission to the university. However, their standardized test scores and grades are close to the cut off which shows us that with a little support Pegasus students, through completing this summer bridge program, can acquire the necessary skills to be successful in college.



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
STUDENT ACADEMIC RESOURCE CENTER

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Unit of Academic Development and Retention
Division of Student Development and Enrollment Services

SARC'S MISSION STATEMENT

The Student Academic Resource Center mission is to strengthen comprehensive learning, enhance retention and promote student success by providing academic support and testing services to UCF students and the surrounding community. This is accomplished through campus and community outreach, academic advising, tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, academic and standardized testing, and learning assistance.

FALL 2004 ACADEMIC SUCCESS WORKSHOPS

Large Class—Big Campus	Wednesday, September 1
Goal Setting and Motivation	Tuesday, September 6
Time Management	Tuesday, September 14
Note Taking / Textbook Reading	Tuesday, September 21
Memory and Concentration	Tuesday, September 28
Power Studying	Wednesday, September 29
Strategies for taking different types of tests	Wednesday, October 6
Stress Management	Tuesday, October 12
Reality Check	Tuesday, October 19
NOW I need to get serious	Tuesday, October 26
Getting to the rest of the semester	Wednesday, November 17
Still trying to get to the rest of the semester	Thursday, November 18

Please contact SARC for time and place!

THE LEARNING FAIR: SARC'S NEW INITIATIVE

This fall semester of 2004, SARC will hold UCF's first "Learning Fair". This new initiative will have the participation of numerous offices and departments that support learning at UCF.

The Learning Fair will provide a venue to showcase the different and excellent academic support services available to our students at UCF. This event was created to foster academic success and retain students through the development of relevant personal and academic skills, and through increased awareness and use of learning support services on campus.

The Learning Fair will feature academic skills workshops on topics that include reading strategies, test-taking skills, time management, note taking, stress management, goal setting, discipline-specific learning strategies (e.g. chemistry and math), learning styles,

library research skills, and many others. The workshops will be conducted by staff members from academic support centers on campus, faculty from selected disciplines, and student leaders who are experienced in tutoring and Supplemental Instruction.

The Learning Fair will also include interactive display tables from different campus programs and organizations that promote learning skills and academic skills workshops. These information tables will not only offer brochures and materials on learning skills but also interactive displays where students will have the opportunity to engage in activities such as games, puzzles, demonstrations.

The Learning Fair will take place on Tuesday, September 14, 2004 in the Student Union, Key West, Room 218AB.