ACADEMIC ENHANCEMENT CENTER (AEC) ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

The Academic Enhancement Center (AEC)
Roosevelt Hall
University of Rhode Island

STEM Tutoring and Academic Consultations:
Phone: 401-874-2367

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Phone: 401-874-5839
I write to you today from a changed world and a changed Academic Enhancement Center (AEC). The 2019-2020 academic year brought changes to the AEC, some anticipated and some unforeseen. The AEC established a Director position to align and unite its flagship programs and conducted a national search in Spring 2020. I’m humbled and honored to write to you now as Director of the Academic Enhancement Center.

Many people will look back at this time in history during a global pandemic and speak of fear, isolation, unrest and sadness. They are right to acknowledge these realities. However, I will remember this moment in history as a time when teamwork triumphed, when ingenuity thrived, when we supported one another, when we comforted one another, and when, above all, we supported our students.

During the past year, we have maintained our commitment to regularly gather and report data, continually examine and update hiring processes and procedures, leverage technology for increased efficiency and accessibility, and collaborate with a variety of on and off campus partners. Through unified and streamlined communications, the AEC programs of STEM Tutoring, the Writing Center and Academic Skills Development Programs provided high-quality services to students and a valued work experience to tutors in a welcoming and supportive space.

In March 2020 the AEC staff projected confidence and calm while behind the scenes they worked furiously to expand their necessary skills, technologies, and infrastructure to support the shift fully online. Through our deep commitment to the mission of the Academic Enhancement Center, we empowered students to become more skillful and successful in using effective learning strategies by offering remote learning resources, new modular content, online tutoring and writing support and innovative course offerings.

Looking ahead, we are united in our commitment to supporting student needs and with uncertainty looming, we will reflect on this year of change and tumult with the knowledge that no challenge is too great for our team to overcome.

Please review the data and accomplishments from our 2019-2020 academic year. The success this year would not have been possible without the talented team of tutors, receptionists and full-time staff with a passion for supporting URI students. To David Hayes, Heather Price and Ceileidh Just, thank you will never be enough to capture my gratitude for your tireless efforts. I’m incredibly proud to be your leader.

Jennifer L. Burgess
Director, Academic Enhancement Center
Utilizing TutorTrac, the software system used to schedule STEM tutoring and report tutorial data, URI students were able to view and schedule meetings themselves. In Spring, they saw no interruptions to services. Instead they encountered expanded online support, increased appointment availability and tutors trained on in-person and online tutorial best practices!

**FALL 2019**

**6,048 TOTAL HOURS TUTORED IN STEM**

Weekly Groups, Occasional Appointments and Drop-In Centers (all in-person).

**SPRING 2020**

**3,703 TOTAL HOURS TUTORED IN STEM**

In-person January-mid-March: Weekly Groups, Occasional Appointments and Drop-In Centers

Online March 22nd-May: Online Weekly Groups and Online Occasional Appointments

**SUMMER 2020**

**210 TOTAL HOURS 300% INCREASE COMPARED TO SUMMER 2019!**

Online tutoring allowed usage in summer to skyrocket, keeping students supported and tutors busy!
Through WC Online, students were able to schedule writing consultations online and in-person all year! In Spring, students encountered expanded online consultation support, a staff of consultants prepared to engage with them remotely and flexibility in appointment length and frequency!

**FALL 2019**

914 TOTAL WRITING CONSULTATIONS

- 891 in-person consultations
- 23 online synchronous consultations

**SPRING 2020**

475 TOTAL WRITING CONSULTATIONS

- January through mid-March:
  - 300 in-person
  - 10 online synchronous
- March 22 through May 5th:
  - 165 online synchronous

**SUMMER 2020**

101 TOTAL WRITING CONSULTATIONS

- 101 online synchronous

844 UNIQUE URI UNDERGRADS USED THE WRITING CENTER!
Students seeking academic guidance encountered expanded support through the debut of the AEC’s new study portal, as well as the expanded UCS 160 course material which included remote learning content, online academic skills consultations and a summer academic success module series!

**FALL 2019**

**273 SCHEDULED CONSULTATIONS**

Predominantly in-person with online as-needed

**SPRING 2020**

**142 SCHEDULED CONSULTATIONS**

January-mid-March: Predominantly in-person with online as-needed after March 23, predominantly online and by phone

**UCS 160:**

**103 ENROLLMENTS**

Fall 2019- 41
Spring 2020- 62

- Partial redesign for Spring 2020 to account for change to online learning
- Full redesign of 160 curriculum for Summer Talent Development scholars for fully online summer instruction
COLLABORATIONS

URI COLLABORATIONS

- URI Offices and Departments:
  - URI Info. Technology Services (ITS): technology training
  - Academic departments & faculty: tutor training (Math, Chemistry, Pharmacy, Physics and Biology)
  - Center for Career and Experiential Education (CCEE): tutor training and professional development
  - Writing Department: Writing Across URI
  - Disability Services for Students: retreat and referral form
  - Undergraduate Research Office: grant proposal workshop
  - College of Pharmacy: reflective writing program
  - Office of the Provost: remote teaching and learning task force
  - Student Affairs: student affairs task force
  - Talent Development: co-developed, and facilitated delivery of online UCS 160, online summer tutorial and online writing support
  - Athletics Advising: facilitated study hall report delivery, co-trained athletics tutors on online tutoring, supported technology questions and issues
  - Starfish: created and administered AEC ‘tutoring concern’ flag for staff
  - Diverse student organizations in STEM: tutor recruitment
  - Early Alert & Dean of Students: collaborative student support
  - Learning Advisory Board: regular meetings with engaged participants
  - Monthly infographics (see supplement on page 9)

EXTERNAL COLLABORATIONS

- Online transition support provided to peer institutions seeking guidance:
  - Stonehill College
  - Providence College
  - Quinsigamond Community College
- TutorTrac by RedRock Software
  - Continual improvements to our software for a high quality student experience
- National Council of Teachers of English
  - #whyiwrite campaign
  - National Day on Writing

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Planned, organized, and hosted inaugural R.I. TutorTrac Drive-In Conference attended by 10 regional users (colleges and universities in the New England region) with 40 attendees in January 2020
  - First user organized conference in RedRock software history
  - RedRock sent attendee from Arizona
  - 100% positive feedback from attendees
  - 100% survey respondents would like another regional drive-in hosted by URI

AEC selected to present twice at 2020 RedRock Software National Conference (postponed to 2021)

Writing Tutors selected to present at NEWCA (New England Writing Centers Association) conference in Spring 2020 (postponed to 2021)

Summer 2020- TLAR (The Learning Assistance Review) accepts self-authored AEC article documenting AEC's adaptation to COVID19 challenges
LOOKING AHEAD

Uncertain times call for careful planning and excellent stewardship of resources. The AEC staff is committed to remaining flexible in times of change. We remain committed to pursuing our goals and "thinking big" as we look to the future.

Technology:
- Meeting the changing needs of students through available technology platforms

Resources:
- Be conscious of budgetary and staffing constraints
- Demonstrate successes and present data to support requests
- Continue to advocate for a success center space to better meet the needs of URI students

Sustainability:
- Create programming that is both sustainable for the AEC as a program
- Create processes that are sustainable environmentally with an emphasis on electronic documentation

Diversity:
- Continue to expand diverse recruitment of tutors and users of our service by partnering with key campus organizations and offices
- Collaborate to seek opportunities for tutors to receive diversity related trainings
- Remain committed as an AEC staff to pursuing social justice, equity and inclusion trainings and experiences.
- Become certified in the CED SJEI badge program by Fall 2021.

Staff:
- Continue to advocate for staffing of a FTE to return STEM tutoring program staff to 2 FTE’s.
- Advocate to formalize GA position within AEC for ongoing GA support
- Continually evaluate staffing needs as program grows, including administrative support
AEC INFOGRAPhICS 19-20

SEPTEMBER 2019
STEM Tutoring
Data and Achievements

WEEKLY TUTORING GROUPS
436 students are enrolled in weekly Tutoring Groups.
601 hours have been conducted for W TG’s.
This is a 308% increase in contact hours when compared to September 2018!

DROP-IN CENTERS AND TUTORING APPOINTMENTS
309 students have been served for a total of 761 hours.
58 Tutoring Appointments have been scheduled.

RESOURCES
33 resources, such as laptops and scientific calculators, have been signed out by students using STEM Tutoring services.

TRAINING HOURS
Our tutors and receptionists have completed a total of 18 hours of professional development and training during the month of September.

STEM Tutoring
AEC by the numbers

185%
increase in tutoring appointments and weekly tutoring groups made in the first week of the spring semester, compared to Spring 2019.

100% of students who have responded to our satisfaction survey in 2019-20 said that they would recommend Academic Consultations to other students.

October 2019
STEM Tutoring Data

Weekly Tutoring Group membership – 114% ahead of this time last year.
Tutoring Appointment membership – 621% ahead of this time last year.
This has provided 112% more contact hours through Weekly Tutoring Groups and Tutoring Appointments compared to this time last year.

Weekly Group and Tutoring Appointment Membership (Fall ‘18 to Fall ‘19 Comparison)

44 classroom visits by Writing Center Consultants in the first month of the Spring 2020 semester.

Undergraduate Writing Fellow embedded in the HPR course, Math and Humanity as part of new WC Writing Fellows initiative.

Academic Enhancement Center
Roosevelt Hall
Writing Center - Room 009, ground floor
STEM Tutoring and Academic Skills Programs - fourth floor

AEC collaborations for October 2019 include:
- Center for Career & Experiential Education
- National Day on Writing
- Office of International Students & Scholars
- Office of the Provost

URI Academic Enhancement Center
STEM Tutoring Programs
Jennifer L. Burgess & Celinda Just
acadservicestutoring