AEC ANNUAL REPORT

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

STEM Tutoring and Academic
Consultations: Phone: 401-874-2367
Writing Center: Phone: 401-874-5839

MEET THE AEC TEAM

Jennifer L. Burgess
Director
Academic Enhancement Center

Dr. David Hayes
Coordinator
Academic Skills
Development

Heather Price
Coordinator
Undergraduate
Writing Center

Ceileidh Just
Coordinator
STEM Tutoring Programs

Edcel Andrei Dinoro
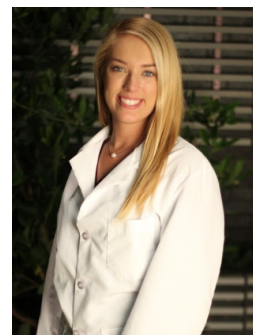Asst. Coordinator
STEM Tutoring Programs

Catherine Callahan
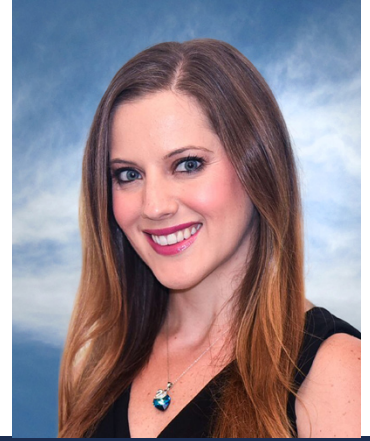Undergraduate Program
Assistant

Suemy Moreira
Former Graduate Assistant
2019-2021

Rachel Barker
Former Undergraduate
Program Assistant

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear AEC partners and stakeholders,

It is my honor to write to you for the second time as the Academic Enhancement Center (AEC) Director. The successes we achieved in the 2020-2021 year would not have been possible without the incredible work and dedication of our AEC full time staff, student employees, and network of dedicated campus supporters. I am grateful for and humbled by the teamwork demonstrated in 2020-2021 and extend an enormous "thank you" to these incredible people.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, the AEC remained guided by its mission of responding to student needs, in all of its flagship programs. This meant being creative, flexible, and imaginative during a time when financial resources were limited, stress levels were high, and uncertainty remained, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the challenges, the AEC rose to the occasion and was able to provide exemplary services in alignment with our mission and strategic plan goals, in new and creative ways. Students and staff alike adapted to ever changing safety protocols, learned to interact in new ways, and were able learn new technologies enabling them to enhance the delivery of services. The AEC also provided robust support, guidance, and services to partners on and off campus, thereby elevating the local, regional, and national profile of the Academic Enhancement Center at the University of Rhode Island. Finally, the AEC maintained its commitment to striving for and achieving the goals set forth in the prior year with specific emphasis on staffing, diversity related professional development, and technology.

Detailed herein, please enjoy an overview of some of the 2020-2021 highlights, data, collaborations, as well as goals for the upcoming academic year.

In humble service to this team, and to the students of the University of Rhode Island,

Jennifer L. Burgess

STEM TUTORING

Utilizing TutorTrac, the software system used to schedule STEM tutoring and report tutorial data, URI students were able to view and schedule meetings themselves. These meetings were available in-person and online. With COVID-19 still impacting the ability to host drop-in tutoring sessions, students encountered expanded online and in-person support, increased appointment availability and tutors trained on in-person and online tutorial best practices!

FALL '20

3,353 visits to STEM tutoring for **2,826 hours** of tutoring by **516** unique students. **20%** of hours spent tutoring were in-person tutoring sessions.

SPRING '21

3,243 visits **2,761** hours **475** unique students.
17% of hours spent tutoring were in-person tutoring sessions.

SUMMER '21

176 visits for **145** hours by **43** unique students
4% of hours spent tutoring were in-person tutoring sessions.*

Note-All summer courses offered online; very few students chose in-person tutoring due to primarily taking classes from home.

TRAINING

AEC STEM tutors completed **20.5 hours** of professional development per capita for Fall, Spring, and Summer combined.

ACADEMIC SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND UCS160

In response to the evolving needs of URI students, the UCS 160 (1cr.) Success in Higher Education course was a primary focus of 20-21. Through curricular modifications and structural changes to the course, UCS 160 was able to meet student needs through multiple formats including: in-person, synchronous online, asynchronous online, late start condensed version, J-term version, and TD summer 2 week version. Additionally, the Academic Skills Development program expanded outreach to students and saw increased engagement in online workshops, academic skills consultations, and training opportunities. Leveraging technology to deliver these services was key to increasing the programs' reach and effectiveness.

359 ENROLLED

students in UCS 160 Fall '20, J-Term '21, Spring '21, Summer '21.
17 students in first J-term 160; **272 TD scholars** in re-designed Summer 160.

226 ATTENDEES

trained via Fundamentals of Tutoring workshops for AEC and non-AEC peer learning support providers in Fall 2020 & Spring 2021.

362 VISITS

to **one-on-one consultations** for Academic Skills Development with Dr. David Hayes in Fall '20, Spring '21 and Summer '21.

253 STUDENTS

attended **Academic Skills Workshops** covering a variety of topics for timely development of college-level learning strategies and skills, metacognitive skills, and planning skills.

THE WRITING CENTER AND WRT 353

The Writing Center responded to the evolving needs of students in 20-21 by focusing on new services and partnerships which expanded and enhanced available support. Asynchronous next-day written feedback, the latest innovation in the Writing Center's repertoire of services, was a popular new addition to the menu of options for students seeking writing support. Furthermore, through collaboration with the Pre-Health program at URI, students were able to access writing consultants trained to support their Pre-Health application process.

WRITTEN FEEDBACK

New Service!
Between fall and spring semesters, peer consultants responded to **202 written feedback requests**, accounting for 24% of total Writing Center consultations.

PRE-HEALTH

New Collab! 38 participants in our Pre-Health Essay Building workshops on Dec. 8, Dec. 15, and Feb. 11
21 Writing Center visits by current students and recent grads applying for Pre-Health graduate programs working on personal statements.

TRAINING

Writing Center consultants completed **26 hours** of professional development per capita for Fall, Spring, and Summer combined.

WRT 353

15 students completed WRT 353, the pipeline course designed to train undergraduate students to become writing center consultants while learning a variety of transferable skills germane to diverse future employment.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

The Academic Enhancement Center (AEC) strives to achieve alignment between daily operations and the strategic plan goals set forth in the UCAS strategic plan, updated for 2020-2024. Below find **2 examples** of specific goals, strategies, and outcomes the AEC has been particularly focused on in the 2020-2021 academic year. Full text of the strategic plan can be found by clicking HERE.

Goal 1
Strategy 7: Elevate the profile locally, regionally, and nationally of the AEC

- AEC featured in student body email on 7/21/2020 for Student Success Module and Discussion Series promo from Provosts office
- Supported multiple campuses through transition to student facing and online services: College of Charleston, Quinsiggamond CC, Providence College, Stonehill College
- AEC works with Assoc Dean A&S Brian Krueger who sends promotion of services to AS faculty Fall 2020
- Vice Provost Anne Veeger sends AEC updated syllabus info to faculty F20 and SP21
- Publication Nov. 2020 in NCLCA Journal of AEC's pandemic response
- URI Today's Lauren Poierer highlighting NCLCA publication of AEC Covid 19 response
- Attend virtual campus resource fair (9/8/20)
- Attend virtual career fair (9/22/20)
- Office of Community Standards-Academic Integrity and promotion of tutoring services all student email sent via provost's office Spring 21
- Two AEC STEM tutors selected to present at NEPTA March 2021 virtual conference
- Campus Learning Advisory Board well attended all year
- Writing Center collaboration with Kelly Napa of Northeastern University for dissertation research

Goal 2
Strategy 1: Use technology to enhance AEC program accessibility.

- Used Starfish for appointment setting and needs identification for academic skills consultations
- Used TutorTrac to set appointments with UCS 160 TAs for this purpose all of '20/21
- Offer UCS 160 as asynchronous online course offered online beginning in Summer 20
- Course approved as regular online course Spring 21 via Fac. Sen.
- Offer academic skills and strategies presentations and workshops and tutor training workshops online offered beginning summer 20
- Offer academic skills consultations online available beginning summer 20 and ongoing
- Collaboration with A&S, ES, and Brightspace for tutor integration
- Successfully completed search for STEM Asst. Coord. who is leveraging existing technology for added program support
- Leveraging Zoom and WebEx for online tutorial appointments
- Began offering asynchronous writing consultations via WC Online to upload and respond

Collaborations

Academic Enhancement Center

- Writing Department
- College of Pharmacy reflective writing
- Undergrad. Research Office-Grant Writing Workshop
- Starfish: Tutor Flags
- Computer Science Dept.
- Diverse student orgs in STEM: recruitment
- Learning Advisory Board: Stakeholders
- Fundamentals of Tutoring Training campus-wide
- Physics Math Biology Chemistry
- ITS & Brightspace Training
- URI 101
- Talent Development (TD)
- Writing Across URI
- TD Tutoring and UCS 160
- Disability Services reciprocal referral process
- Athletics Advising: Tutor Training
- Athletic Study Hall Data

Looking Ahead

Having weathered the COVID-19 storm while continuing to thrive, the AEC looks forward to a year of growth, expansion and creativity. Of all lessons learned in these times of uncertainty, the AEC staff feels that remaining committed to flexibility while centering student support will continue to ground all practices. As always, we remain committed to pursuing our goals and "thinking big" as we look to the future.

Technology:
- Continued access to a variety of online resources for added accessibility
- Furthering our usage of the TutorTrac system, implementing new reports and drop-in tutoring strategies for maximized efficiency

Resources:
- Remain conscious of budgetary and staffing constraints while advocating for resources in areas of demonstrated need
- Showcase achievements and present data to support requests
- Continue to advocate for a success center space to better meet the needs of an expanding AEC to better support URI students
- Create and pilot a comprehensive STEM drop-in center allowing tutors to serve in multi-subject support roles saving money and providing more convenience to students

Sustainability:
- Complete transition to all electronic record keeping system for student worker files by Spring 2022

Diversity:
- Continue to expand diverse recruitment of tutors and users of our service by partnering with key campus organizations and offices
- Build upon existing relationship with CED to continue educating AEC employees on issues related to equity, inclusion, and diversity
- 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:
- Continually evaluate staffing needs as program grows, including administrative support
- Expansion of tutorial staff into new areas beyond STEM (Business and others)