

Spring 2016

TLC Newsletter



“Empowering Students to Achieve Success!”

TLC Hours

Monday-Thursday

7:30 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Friday

7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Saturday

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Staff Directory

Staff:

Jacob Lewellen – Director
Sam Crandall – Asst. Director
Glynette Hubach – Secretary
Tara Lacio – FT Math Tutor
Micah Mayle - PT Supervisor

Faculty:

Carolyn Brockman
Martha Crise
Lisa Marks
Jayna Spindler
Shelby Gannott

Reading Program:

Kimberly Whalen – Coordinator
Lisa Roberson
Krista Stone
Daniel Templeton

In This Issue...

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Welcome to the seventh newsletter for the *Speckman* Tutoring & Learning Center! We hope you enjoy these articles and the many more to come in future semesters.

Empowering Students

By Tara Lacio, FT Tutor

Everyone knows the elephant in the room: COMPASS out, self-placement in. Teachers and students alike may have questions about this new way of deciding which English, math, and reading classes are right for students. What if the wrong decision was made in placement? What if a student signed up for a class they were not ready for? The TLC can help. Along with offering all the same great services we always do, the TLC has also implemented some new ideas.

After Math

The TLC now offers After Math sessions for MTH 050 and MTH 110! Students can receive help with test corrections as well as review the fundamental building blocks to be successful in completion of the course.

Locations/Times:

Quiet Study

ICE 201

Thursday 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Friday 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Online on Blackboard

Online Math Tutoring & Learning Center

Thursday 10 a.m.-1p.m.

Friday 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Dates:

February 11 and 12 (MTH 110 – Test 1)

February 25 and 26 (MTH 050 – Test 1)

March 3 and 4 (MTH 110 – Test 2)

March 24 and 25 (MTH 110 – Test 3)

March 31 and April 1 (MTH 050 – Test 2)

April 21 and 22 (MTH 110 – Test 4)

Check out Pages 4 and 5 to find even more ways the TLC Empowers Students!

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Designer: Sam Crandall Editor: Lisa Marks

Coffee & Conversation

By Samantha Crandall,
Assistant Director

In the Fall 2015 semester, the TLC piloted a new program for its world languages tutoring. Coffee & Conversation is a place to practice Spanish, French, German, and English while you enjoy a relaxing and friendly atmosphere.

ICW 211

Fridays

9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

You do not need to be enrolled in a language class to participate in Coffee & Conversation. Here are a few testimonials from our students last semester:

“Coffee & Conversation is awesome. Chatting, eating, and the light and cheery atmosphere have helped me focus on my work and understand some of the more confusing parts of my homework. And listening to all the different languages is fun.”



Feeling Anxious?

By Shelby Gannott, Instructor



It's okay to admit it; college can be stressful.

Students today face many challenges when it comes to being successful in school, and those challenges bring with them a host of potentially negative side effects. College, much like life, is a bit of an emotional roller coaster. The semester typically opens with anticipation, excitement, and high spirits. As the journey begins, you start to wonder what you've gotten yourself into. Reaching the peak of

midterm can become what feels like an uphill battle as you try to maintain your composure and control. As projects, papers, and exams pile up, you may start to feel like you're being pulled in several directions without knowing which way is up. Then finals loom, and it may be tempting to just close your eyes and wait for the semester to end, but that roller coaster is moving fast and you've got to finish the journey. Once finals are over, there's a huge sigh of relief; whether good or bad, it's finally over!

Don't worry if you've ever felt overwhelmed by the stress and anxiety that this journey can bring, because you are not alone. There are many strategies that can help you relax and calm those nerves when it feels like they're out of control. These include, but are not limited to, keeping a positive attitude, taking frequent study breaks, deep breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, expressing your feelings in a positive way, and asking for help.

Author Charles F. Glassman has said, “Believing in negative thoughts is the single greatest obstruction to success,” and he's right. When you begin feeling anxious and stressed, your attitude can become very negative, and your motivation may plummet. To better cope with the stress, try to be very aware of your thoughts and how they're affecting your attitude. Instead of seeing your problems as roadblocks, try to think of them as potential teachers. Every obstacle is an opportunity to learn. Avoid comparing yourself to others because this is your journey not theirs. Focus on your successes no matter how small, and use your success from the past as evidence to prove to yourself that you can keep going.

One common misconception about successful studying is that hours of cramming will help you prepare. The reality is that long study sessions can induce more stress and anxiety by making you feel overwhelmed and pressed for time. To combat this, be proactive about preparing for exams and presentations. Start weeks in advance and study for just an hour or two several times each week. You'll feel good about being ahead of the game, and your brain will have more time to process and store the information. If you find yourself with no choice but to study for several hours, then take frequent breaks. Stand up and walk around, do some stretching to get your blood flowing, listen to some of your favorite music, or get a quick snack. Even if your break is only 5 minutes, it can give you enough time to reset, and you'll feel more focused and alert when you return to studying.

If you find that a quick break is not enough to calm your nerves, you may also try some deep breathing exercises. One of the common physical effects of anxiety is that the breath becomes shallow and irregular, so deep breathing exercises work by bringing your attention to the breath and slowing it down.

To get the most benefit from this exercise, stop what you're working on, close your eyes, and place your body in a relaxed position. Work on creating an even flow of breath, with the inhale lasting the same length as the exhale. It may help to silently count during your inhale and exhale to ensure they're the same length. Once they're balanced, work on increasing the length to slow your breath down even more. Practice deep breathing for a minimum of 5 rounds to maximize relaxation. For long term benefits, you can also develop a mantra, which is a short personal statement you repeat to yourself while breathing or trying to relax. For example, "I am calm" or "Let go."

Another relaxation technique that pairs well with deep breathing exercises is progressive muscle relaxation. This strategy involves focusing your attention on various muscle groups one at a time. When the focus is pinpointed at one part of the body, you will become more aware of any tension you may be holding there and work to release that tension. This is done by tightening up those muscles and holding it for 3 to 5 seconds, then releasing the hold with an exhale. By the time you've covered each muscle group, your body will be in a more tranquil state, allowing you to focus on studying.



For some students, stress weighs more heavily on the mind than on the body. If you are feeling very negative about a particular situation and having trouble working through your thoughts, writing them down may help you process. Make a list or just free write about the thoughts that are building up in your mind. Once they are out of your head and on the paper, they become easier to work through. Ask yourself: Are my thoughts reasonable and realistic? If I were helping a friend in my situation, what advice would I give? Am I being too hard on myself? Another helpful exercise is to write down all of your most negative and damaging thoughts on paper, and then crumple it up and throw it away. This is an action that allows you to witness the thoughts (rather than ignoring them), and by then throwing them away, you're committing to not letting the negativity continue to bring you down.

Last but not least, don't hesitate to seek help and support when the stress is getting to you. Your friends, family, and fellow students are excellent places to turn when you need to talk. OTC also offers free counseling services for all students at all campuses and locations, as well as helpful resources online at <http://students.otc.edu/counselingservices/>. As this semester's roller coaster ride begins, plan ahead so you'll know where to turn if and when the stress of school catches up to you.



"The conversation table on Fridays has been very successful! The relaxed atmosphere (with food!) is very attractive. I have enjoyed coming and meeting other students and native Spanish speakers. It has been a great place to converse in French & Spanish and to bring my Spanish language questions."

"Going to the conversation room has helped me greatly. I took French 101 in the Spring and halfway through the semester, we were told that French 102 would not be available until next Spring. Spending time in the conversation room not only helped me keep up with what I have learned but also to learn more and prepare for French 102 after nearly a year."

"To me, the conversation room is a safe place to learn a new language with like minded people who actually want to learn."

Empowering Students

By Tara Lacio, FT Tutor

College Prep Day

In a college-wide collaboration, the TLC organized College Prep Day. This semi-annual event brought students to campus for a day (or two) to get everything taken care of for the beginning of the new semester.

Students were able to

pick up their books, ask last-minute questions in Student Services, register their vehicles with Safety & Security, and attend staff- and faculty-led sessions on basic computer skills, math, calculators, and reading. Shawna Burns, TLC math and study skills tutor, even designed a session called “College Survival 101” where she shared all the ins-and-outs of what to expect in college and provided helpful study tips. Watch for this event to happen again in the fall. If instructors or departments are interested in presenting a session or helping with College Prep Day, please contact Tara Lacio laciot@otc.edu.



By Dr. Carolyn Brockman, Instructor

Chicken and Puff Pastry



Ingredients

6 slices bacon
1 tablespoon olive oil
3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cubed
1/2 cup chopped onion
1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme leaves OR 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
2 sheets frozen puff pastry, thawed
1 egg, beaten

Directions

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. In medium skillet, cook bacon until crisp; remove, drain on paper towels, crumble, and set aside. Drain pan; do not wipe out. Add olive oil to pan and add chicken and onion. Cook together until onion is tender and chicken is no longer pink, about 7-8 minutes. Remove with slotted spoon to medium bowl. Add cream cheese and bacon to chicken mixture along with the thyme and mix well; if you're adding fresh herbs, add them at this point. Gently roll out each puff pastry sheet across the fold lines to make it a bit wider. Cut each sheet into thirds following the fold lines of the pastry. Then cut in half across the strips to make six rectangles from each sheet. Put 1/3 to 1/2 cup of the chicken mixture in the center of six rectangles. Top with the other six rectangles and gently stretch the top rectangles to fit. Seal edges and press with fork. Place on cookie sheet and brush with beaten egg. Bake for 20-25 minutes until deep golden brown. Remove to wire rack and let cool 5 minutes before serving; the filling is very hot!

Lemonade Pie

Ingredients

6 cups vanilla ice cream or lemon ice cream, softened
1 (6 ounce) can frozen lemonade concentrate, thawed
1 9" graham cracker crust, either homemade or purchased



Directions

If you're making your own graham cracker crust, make it in a 9" pan (look online for recipe). If you're buying a crust, buy the 9-ounce size that is labeled "two extra servings". Otherwise, there will be too much filling for the crust.

In a medium bowl, mix the ice cream and lemonade concentrate with a hand mixer until blended. Immediately spoon the ice cream mixture into the graham cracker crust. Freeze at least 4 hours until firm. Let stand at room temperature for 10 minutes before cutting to make serving easier.

TLC Staff Highlight

By Dr. Carolyn Brockman, Instructor

Linda Walker, who started as a TLC receptionist, is now a STEM tutor in the TLC and a student at Southwest Baptist University pursuing her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) to become a registered nurse. Her desire for the future is to help as many people as possible in health care. She believes there is “always room for better improvements.” She is especially interested in cardiology and neurology.



Linda was born in Ft. Leonard Wood, MO, where her father was stationed in the Army. She grew up in Fair Grove, MO with her father, mother, two older brothers and one older sister, along with many neighborhood friends. As a child, Linda enjoyed exploring, collecting rocks and leaves, and riding bikes with her friends. She said she enjoyed spending most of her time outside. She described her childhood as a typical “country bumpkin” upbringing.

Linda’s maternal family is based mostly in Seoul, Korea. She has only been able to visit once but hopes to go back after she finishes her degree. Her family is very important to her, and she credits them for giving her the strength to follow her dreams.

Linda loves all kinds of music and attributes this to having worked in a music store “many, many moons ago.” In her free time, Linda enjoys reading mysteries, science fiction, and comics such as Peanuts and independent works.

When asked if there was something she wished she could do all over again, Linda answered “My high school education,” explaining that she would have concentrated more on it and set better goals at the time. However, now working toward her BSN degree, her focus is particularly strong.

Where are They Now? *By Jacob Lewellen, Director*



At the Speckman Tutoring & Learning Center, we are blessed with the opportunity to work with many fantastic tutors. This is a great job for students as they transition into their career. When tutors leave our employ, we are sad to see them go, but happy to see them moving forward. In this column, we talk to former tutors and learn where they are and what exciting things are happening with them.

For this issue, we talk with Rebecca (Pursley) Ancell., former math tutor.

What was the best part of working in the TLC?

The best part was that I enjoyed seeing others succeed.

What is your profession?

I work in the technology field.

Where do you work?

I work at Cerner Corporation in Kansas City, MO.

According to Missouri Business magazine in an article entitled “Super Cerner—Tech Giant’s Growth is Shaping Kansas City,” Cerner is a 2015 Champion of Enterprise Award Winner (Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry) and is annually recognized by Forbes as one of the most innovative companies in the world.

Name 3 significant things that have changed since you worked in the TLC.

1. I graduated from Missouri State University with a degree in Computer Science and a Minor in Mathematics.
2. I’m a Software Engineer at Cerner.
3. I volunteer at an animal shelter.

Tutoring

The TLC has always offered FREE tutoring to currently enrolled OTC students, and you can expect the same this year. In anticipation of the influx of students from guided self-placement, the TLC now has 24 math tutors on staff. Students can expect to have access to anywhere from 2-5 algebra tutors at any given time.

Many students have opted to leave the algebra path and take Contemporary Math (MTH 128) instead, which is why the TLC offers weekly training to the tutors so that more help is available for MTH 128.

We also bumped up the number of study skills tutors in the TLC. Study skills tutors can help with strategies for organization, time management, test-taking/test anxiety, etc.—for *any* subject in *any* class you’re taking!

Classes

Students can still pick up one of many B-block classes taught by TLC faculty:

CAC-110: Introduction to College

CAC-120: Keys to College Success

RDG-100: College Vocabulary

TLC-021: Critical Thinking

TLC-022: Study Strategies for College

TLC-023: Math Study Strategies

TLC 030: Algebra Essentials.

TLC-041: Basic English Grammar

TLC-050: Vocabulary

Tutor Appreciation Week

March 28 - April 2

CRL Certifications

Level 1

Cody
Andrew
Colton
Thomas
Cinnamon
Wei

Level 2

Fred
Sarah
Ashley
Allise
Hanna
Rachael
Trish
Serge
Chau
Destiny
Mena

Level 3

Shawna Snow
Elizabeth Marie
Iria Lewis
Chuck
Lindsey
Josh
Dallas
Lea
Dustin
Tara
Rachel