SELECTED BEST PRACTICES FOR TUTORING SERVICES & COURSE-BASED LEARNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Each of these best practices should be considered as you design or redesign any program. Decide which ones are most relevant for your campus or could have the greatest impact on your program's future success. **Please indicate if you agree or disagree, or provide comments, for each selected best practice, whether or not you do it yet on your own campus.** *** Note: A = items from Tutoring Services; B= items from Course-based Learning Assistance (CLA). Items have been chosen for parallelism and/or their complementary nature.*

Program Design & Activities

Agree?	Please indicate agree/disagree. Make comments below each criterion statement.
	1A. The tutoring program works with academic and other departments to determine courses for which tutoring would be helpful and to generate lists of potential tutors.
	1B. The Course-based Learning Assistance (CLA) program works with other academic support services and other academic and student service units to identify target courses in need of support (Example: consult with administrators for input regarding critical courses to support). CLA offerings seek to not duplicate existing services.
	2A. Support is provided for as many courses as needed, within budgetary, staff, mission, and space constraints of the program.
	2B. Academic support is provided for as many courses as possible within the CLA program's budget, staff, mission, and campus space for the program.
	3A. The tutoring program's website is linked to a main page of the institution's website and is easily found by using the search word "tutor" or "tutoring".
	3B. The CLA program maintains a publicly-accessible website connected to the campus web site that provides information about the mission, goals, staff directory, courses supported and study group schedules/ locations, and phone and email contact info.
	4A. The tutoring program is based on a theoretical and/or conceptual foundation that promotes student learning and student development. (Note: A theoretical foundation demonstrates the use of existing theorists (such as Vygotsky, Perry, Chickering) in tutor training and in interactions with students. A conceptual framework deals with a system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that support and inform a research design or, in this case, a program design).
	4B. During facilitator training, the CLA session activities intentionally incorporate several underlying student learning and student development theories. These connections are explained during the relevant session activities.

Teaching & Learning Environment
(Physical & Psychological)

Agree?	Please indicate agree/disagree. Make comments below each criterion statement.
	1A. The tutoring program provides a welcoming, comfortable, respectful, and non- threatening learning environment for all students regardless of race, gender, ability, religion, nationality, mobility challenges, learning differences, and other differences.
	1B. The environment where CLA sessions occur is conducive to reflection, study, and learning (Examples: accessible, temperature, noise, and lighting).
	2A. All functional areas of the tutoring program have suitable and adequate furnishings including furniture, computer or laptop stations, chalkboards or whiteboards, screens and equipment for presentations, assistive technology, etc.
	2B. Appropriate learning supplies and equipment for CLA sessions are available as needed (Examples: chalk, dry erase markers, eraser, whiteboard cleaner, paper, pens/pencils, maps, overhead projectors, video projectors, projection screens, charts, models, and a laptop computer for the facilitator).
	3A. Program staff and tutors have direct access to the director to share issues, concerns, and incidents.
	3B. CLA facilitators have the personal cell phone number of the CLA administrator to notify in case of emergencies as well as phone numbers for the first points of contact (such as campus security) for emergencies.
	4A. Program staff and tutors have training in ethical practices for interacting with students. Such training may include work with Human Resources, Counseling, and/or outside consultants. Program staff and tutors abide by the Code of Ethics. See https://myatp.org/code-of-ethics/
	4B. CLA sessions encourage a climate of freedom, responsibility, and mutual respect (Examples: facilitator intervenes in discussions if a student makes negative remarks about others or an identity group in a session; facilitator displays cultural competence through the use of sensitive language with diverse students in the sessions; and participants are given multiple options for their involvement in activities).
	5A. The director has direct access to human resources and upper administrators to share issues, concerns, and incidents in the program and in tutoring sessions. The

Agree?	Please indicate agree/disagree. Make comments below each criterion statement.
	director informs human resources and upper administrators about concerns before they become incidents.
	5B. CLA facilitators have a list of campus and community resources to make referrals (Examples: the writing center, tutoring center, health and wellness center, counseling, accessibility services, abused person shelters, food shelf, and substance abuse).
	6A/B. Tutoring and CLA program administrators and staff have access to private spaces for meetings of a confidential nature with tutors and students.

Content & Delivery of Courses & Services

Agree?	Please indicate agree/disagree. Make comments below each criterion statement.
	1A. A syllabus for tutor training exists, which outlines the overall goals of the training curriculum, includes learning objectives, describes training activities, and lists books, handouts, electronic media, and other materials to be used in training.
	1B. (sample of listed activities):During the initial training workshop for the academic term, CLA facilitators observe sample lectures by instructors, work with others to identify the needs that students might have with the academic content, and then plan a session which follows the campus model that addresses those needs.
	2A.1. The tutor training curriculum follows the guidelines set out in the International Tutor Training Program Certification through the College Reading & Learning Association (CRLA; CRLA.net).
	2A.2. Additionally, for specialized programs (writing centers, mathematics, engineering, student-athletes, grant populations, etc.), the tutor training curriculum follows guidelines set by those organizations. For programs working with student athletes, instructional materials provide information on relevant NCAA regulations and institutional practices regarding compliance.
	2B. Each national/international CLA program has precise procedures for training and professional development. The CLA administrator and staff read the professional literature of the CLA program and other publications related to peer learning programs to incorporate new strategies into their program.
	3A. Tutor learning objectives are purposefully designed to include all levels of Benjamin Bloom's *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals*. (Note: A simple online search will provide discussion of the Taxonomy.)
	3B. CLA session activities foster critical thinking by using questions from the upper levels of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives.

	4A. Instructional materials and activities engage tutors in critical thinking and metacognitive strategies with the explicit intention of such strategies being applied in tutoring sessions.
	4B. The CLA facilitator integrates opportunities within the sessions for students to acquire and master learning strategies directly applied to the course content material by students practicing with and using them to more deeply understand the course content and solve problems (Examples: different problem solving strategies, lecture note taking, test question prediction, review of error patterns from previous tests.)
	5A. Efforts are made to include campus experts for particular tutor training topics.
	5B. Faculty, staff, and administrators around the campus (Examples: learning assistance program, disability services, counseling center, education department, office of research) due to their expertise (Examples: learning theory and strategies, training programs, research assistance, and referral) are invited to be involved in CLA training and support of the program.
	6. Tutor training objectives, course activities, and materials assist tutors in understanding appropriate tutoring session behaviors and attitudes, including academic integrity, civility, tolerance, and ethical and responsible use of technology.
	7. Online tutoring services follow the guidelines set out by the Association of Colleges for Tutoring and Learning Assistance (ACTLA.info).
	9. Great sources for facilitator training content have been published by several organizations: College Reading and Learning Association, National Organization for Student Success, International Center for Supplemental Instruction, and International Center for Peer-Led Team Learning. The content within these guides draws upon them by identifying best practices that could benefit any peer program.

DATA COLLECTION

Agree?	Please indicate agree/disagree. Make comments below each criterion statement.
	1A. The tutoring program tracks use of services as well as unfilled requests for services, by course and by term, in order to predict and provide sufficient tutors in subsequent, similar terms.
	2A. Within the parameters of its mission, the tutoring program regularly assesses if student needs for tutoring (i.e., for particular courses, time of day, modality of service) are being met.

	3B. The CLA program collects, stores, and analyzes data through its own resources and has sufficient institutional support to gain access to data generated by other sources (Examples: admissions and Registrar). If the CLA professional staff are unable to perform these functions, the institution provides the appropriate staff support.
	4B. The CLA administrator has a basic knowledge of descriptive statistics (Examples: calculating mean, median, and mode; participation frequency count; and summarizing student survey responses).
	5A. To assess students' academic success or improvement, the tutoring program collects information on grades and/or persistence in the tutored course, either from student records (better) or student surveys.
	6A. The tutoring program systematically collects data to assess the impact of tutoring in specific classes by comparing the grades of tutored versus non-tutored students in the selected course(s) and/or comparing the two groups in terms of persistence in selected courses. (Should this be essential or recommended?)
	6B. The CLA Program engages in level two evaluation: Immediate student outcomes analysis by descriptive methods. This level of analysis examines student outcomes that may be associated with the CLA program. While level one evaluation focuses on how many students participated, this level examines whether the program made a difference in final course grades in the target course. The evaluation should be conducted every academic term that the CLA program is offered. This level of evaluation addresses the fundamental question: To what extent does the CLA program have an immediate impact on the students?
	7A. To assess students' improved knowledge of the content course and/or use of learning and study strategies, the tutoring program collects information from tutor session notes or from student session feedback notes.
	7B. CLA participants evidence a greater understanding of essential target course knowledge and skills as demonstrated through activities during the CLA sessions.
	8A. The tutoring program collects data on tutors to determine the impact of the program on the tutors it employs.
	8B. CLA supports academic and personal growth for both participants and facilitators (Examples: in addition to supporting higher academic achievement for participants and their own personal development, the administrator creates opportunities for facilitators to reflect about the impact of the program on themselves).

Examples of Self-Study Rubrics include:
(1) Hunter Boylan's Book *What Works*
(2) CRLA *Handbook for Training Peer Tutors and Mentors*.
(3) CAS Standards for Learning Assistance Programs (Available at CRLA.net in members only section)
(4) NCLCA criteria for Learning Centers of Excellence (NCLCA.org)
(5) The Association for College Tutoring and Learning Assistance (ACTLA.info) best practices for online tutoring,
(6) Various websites providing guidance for SI, PLTL, SLA, etc.,
(7) Websites particular to advising, FYE, mathematics, writing, and content areas