



WALTER E. DENNIS LEARNING CENTER

ANNUAL REPORT
2016 - 2017

ABOUT US

The Dennis Learning Center (DLC) team includes one directing faculty member, two administrative staff, nine graduate associates, seven undergraduates, and 12 lecturers. We support the academic success of all Ohio State students with individual academic coaching, elective courses and group workshops. In addition, we develop custom programs in collaboration with other units and conduct research on college students' learning and motivation.



OUR MISSION

The DLC supports students so that they can enter, excel in and successfully complete academic programs at The Ohio State University. We help students thrive by providing assistance in areas that include motivation, academic stress, procrastination, study skills, time management, test taking, active reading and note-taking, and self-regulation strategies. We also are devoted to the advancement of research that promotes greater understanding of college students' academic success.

DLC SPOTLIGHT

Emily Rice is an academic coach who is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Marketing with an entrepreneurship and innovation minor. In the interview below, Emily shared thoughts on her two years with the DLC.



WHAT MADE WORKING AS AN ACADEMIC COACH UNIQUE FROM OTHER CAMPUS JOB OPPORTUNITIES?

Working as an academic coach has allowed me to develop personal relationships with other students on campus. It is especially unique to see how relationships with students develop after multiple appointments. Students begin to feel more confident in their academic lives and more comfortable asking for help from professors, academic advisors and others.

IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU FEEL WORKING AS AN ACADEMIC COACH HAS DEVELOPED YOU PROFESSIONALLY?

Coaching has given me opportunities to publicly speak. I know the importance of preparing a presentation and can more confidently speak in front of large groups. I also feel comfortable having one-on-one conversations with others. These skills have come in handy in situations like class presentations, interviews and meeting with managers.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR ROLE AS AN ACADEMIC COACH?

One aspect of being an academic coach is that no work day is the same. Whether it be meeting with different students or presenting workshops, every day is unique. I also like the ability to impact so many students at Ohio State and help provide them with academic support.

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS YOU HAVE GAINED AS THE RESULT OF BEING A COACH?

Being an academic coach has helped me improve my listening skills. The job involves being able to listen to and decipher a student's academic needs. These skills are transferable to the real world where you might have to listen to a customer, client or boss and help them accomplish their goals. This job has also allowed me to work in a team setting, whether that be shadowing and mentoring other coaches or picking up appointments and workshops when needed. We all work together to make sure we're helping students as much as possible.

WHAT DO YOU FEEL BEING A COACH HAS ADDED TO YOUR UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE?

My job as an academic coach has introduced me to coworkers who have become good friends. It also helped make my time at Ohio State feel more meaningful. I've been able to impact many students at all stages of their academic careers.

HOW HAVE YOUR EXPERIENCES AS A COACH HELPED PREPARE YOU FOR LIFE AFTER OHIO STATE?

As an academic coach, I've become more confident striking up conversations with new people and expanding my network. I've seen this occur in school and work settings. This job has also helped me manage my time. I've had to juggle being a full-time student, being involved in extracurriculars on campus and managing my work schedule.

COURSES

In the 2016-17 academic year, we offered multiple sections of five educational psychology elective courses to help students become skilled, confident and motivated learners.



ES EPSY 1159:

Online Learning Strategies and Skills | 389 students in 14 sections

Students gained familiarity with tools and strategies that promoted effective and efficient online learning while bringing more interest and value to their studies. This two-credit, seven-week course was offered online in summer, autumn and spring.

ES EPSY 1259:

Learning and Motivation Strategies for Success in College | 881 students in 37 sections

In our flagship course, students fine-tuned their motivation, time management and study skills as they learned a wide range of strategies that enabled them to perform successfully in their college coursework. This three-credit, full-semester course was taught in both face-to-face and online settings in summer, autumn and spring.

ES EPSY 1359:

Technology-Enhanced Learning Strategies | 52 students in 2 sections

Students developed self-reflection, information literacy, teamwork and presentation strategies as they used technology to communicate findings in academic and professional settings. This three-credit, seven-week course was offered in a blended format in autumn and spring.

ES EPSY 2059:

Becoming a Self-Regulated Learner | 119 students in 7 sections

Students who recently had experienced academic challenges built academic skills and resilient mindsets to complete the semester on a strong note. This two-credit, seven-week course was offered in a face-to-face format in autumn and spring. It was also included as a key component of a new academic recovery and enrichment program **SpringForward** (see pages 11-12).

THE RETENTION RATE FOR STUDENTS WHO TOOK ES EPSY 1259 IN THEIR FIRST SEMESTER WAS 95.4%, COMPARED WITH THE UNIVERSITY'S OVERALL RETENTION RATE OF 94.2%.

Total course enrollment increased 7% over the prior year, reaching a record high of 1,462 students in 62 sections.

ES EPSY 5892:

Critical Thinking and Lifelong Learning | 21 students in 2 sections

Students developed their critical thinking abilities and prepared to be lifelong learners by practicing metacognition, self-expression, abstract thinking, reasoning, analysis and evaluation. In addition, students implemented plans for personal, interpersonal and intellectual growth. This three-credit, full-semester course was taught in autumn and spring.

WHAT TOPICS DID STUDENTS FIND MOST HELPFUL?

ES EPSY 1159

online search strategies
online task lists
online calendars
assessing yourself as a learner
web-based study tools

ES EPSY 1259

time management
preparing for exams
motivation
self-regulated learning
goal setting

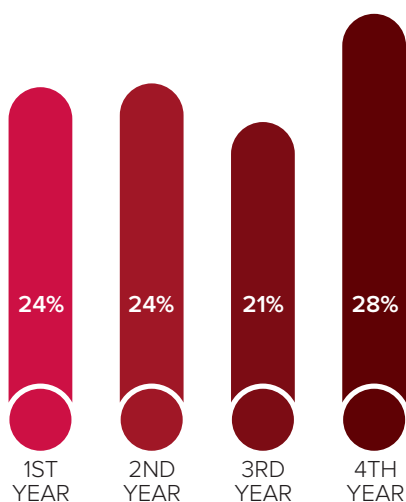
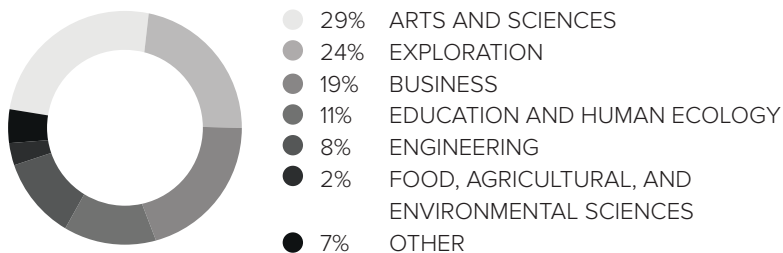
ES EPSY 2059

time management
overcoming procrastination
managing stress and increasing happiness
recognizing when you are off course
growth mindset

STUDENTS WHO
TOOK OUR
FLAGSHIP
COURSE
EXPERIENCED A
GPA BOOST OF
APPROXIMATELY
ONE-THIRD OF A
LETTER GRADE.

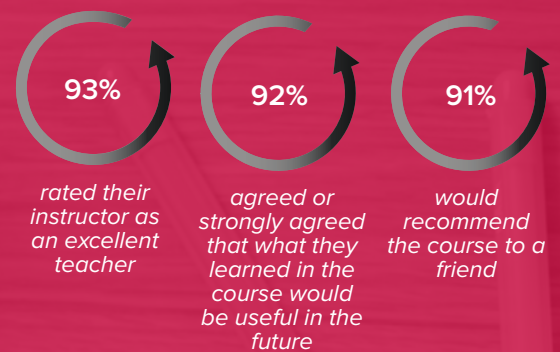


WHO WERE OUR STUDENTS?



HOW DID STUDENTS RATE OUR COURSES?

Across all of the DLC's courses this past year:



WHAT DID STUDENTS SAY ABOUT THE DLC'S COURSES?

"For the first time in my life I have been taught how to study. This is huge. I am so glad I took this course."

"This class has helped me grow and be able to now do things that I was incapable of doing before. I'm much more confident in completing things like homework and exams and I will forever hold onto the information and skills I've learned throughout this course."

"This class allowed me to take new techniques and ideas and directly apply them while I was taking the class. This helped me organize and motivate myself through the semester."

WHAT DID STUDENTS SAY ABOUT THE DLC'S INSTRUCTORS?

"Very friendly and passionate about the class. Made sure everyone was engaged and really worked hard to make everyone feel included."

"Had a great passion for teaching that was evident in her energy and attitude that she had in every class. Challenged us to think and discuss for ourselves instead of her lecturing all class. Found many fun activities and other ways of teaching other than lecturing, making class much more fun and engaging. Also provided many relevant examples of class materials, which helped me a lot."

"She showed us that she really loves teaching and that she was absolutely willing to help us understand the material to help us succeed."

ACADEMIC COACHING

Ohio State undergraduate, graduate and professional students took part in one-on-one coaching to develop efficient and effective academic strategies.



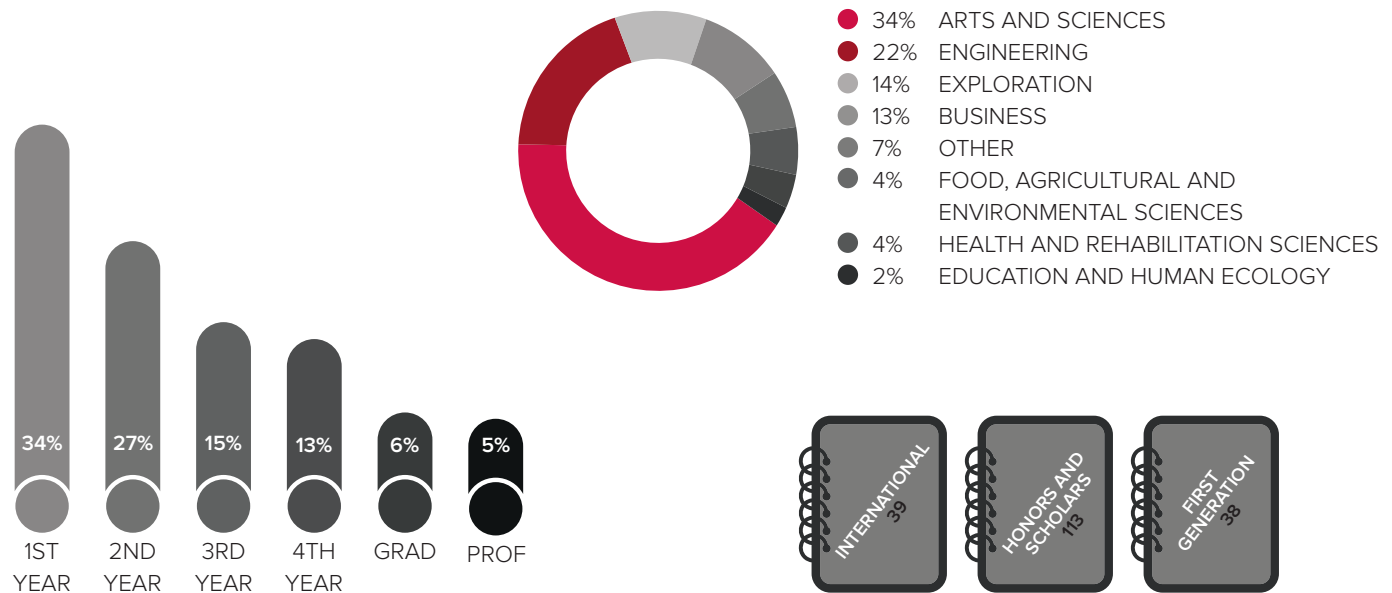
The DLC's academic coaching services provided Ohio State students with individualized instruction, feedback and accountability on topics such as building effective study methods, busting procrastination and becoming a confident and resilient student. Academic coaches tailored each session by developing a clear understanding of individual students' goals, current study strategies and any challenges or concerns. Academic coaches then helped students learn about and practice applying new academic strategies, behaviors and attitudes to reach their goals.

WHO TOOK PART IN ACADEMIC COACHING?

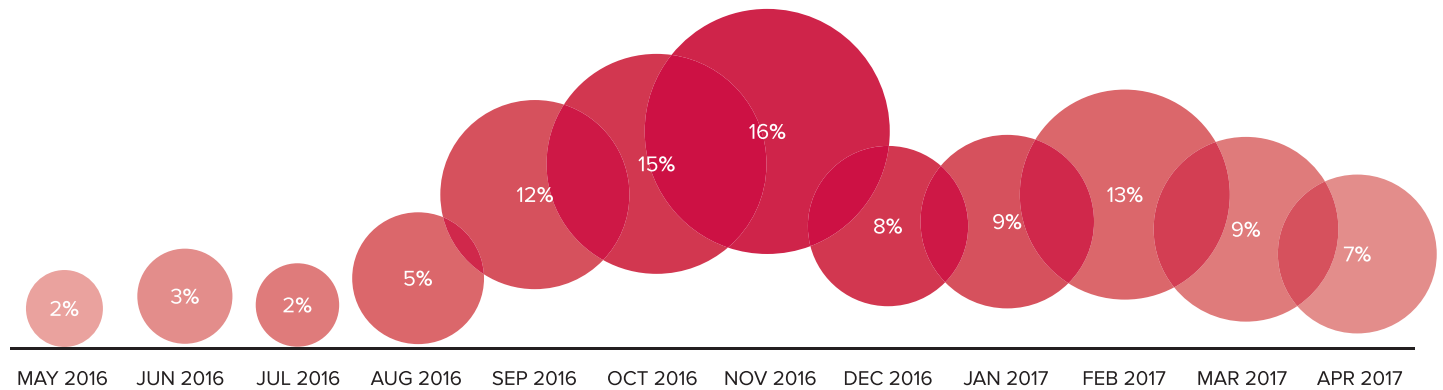
Total sessions: 1,120

Total unique students served: 630

Average # of sessions per student: 1.8



WHEN DID STUDENTS COME FOR ACADEMIC COACHING?



HOW DID STUDENTS RATE ACADEMIC COACHING?

After participating in academic coaching, students indicated “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” to the following statements:



I would recommend coaching to other students in a similar situation.



I am very satisfied with my experience meeting with the academic coach.



The coaching session helped me improve as a student.



I am better prepared to handle the concerns I had when making this appointment.

WHAT DID STUDENTS SAY ABOUT THE COACHING EXPERIENCE?

“I got to recognize and acknowledge my weaknesses as a student and learner during this session and figure out how to effectively tackle them.”

“[The] most valuable part of the coaching session was being able to practice the skills we discussed. My coach and I created a schedule that allowed me to really apply them.”

“My coach took the time to listen to me and explain things. They were really understanding of my stress and the help they offered went above and beyond.”

“My coach was fantastic in helping me figure out my weaknesses in lectures and exams and how best to improve.”

“It was wonderful to have a non-judgmental environment to discuss my difficulties with studying and my anxiety surrounding it.”

“I never struggled with academics before coming to college. Academic coaching helped me learn how to balance my classes, adjust to college, learn how to study effectively and retain information.”

“I felt very confident leaving the sessions I had with my coach. He was very polite, understanding and helpful. He truly cared about helping improve my experience as a student.”

“I have become aware of what exactly I need to do to become more focused and organized to reach my goals.”

RESEARCH



As part of its core mission, the DLC is devoted to the advancement of rigorous, nationally recognized research that extends the knowledge and understanding of college students' academic success. We support research that promotes theoretical understanding and contributes to the next generation of instructional methods designed to facilitate the success of students at Ohio State. The DLC Research Group consists of faculty, staff and graduate students who conduct research on these issues, with a special focus on the experiences of students assisted by the DLC.

OVER THE PAST YEAR, RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY THE DLC RESEARCH GROUP ADDRESSED QUESTIONS SUCH AS:

- How does college students' sense of belonging relate to the use of metacognitive strategies when learning?
- How can the use of self-report surveys assessing college students' learning strategies be made more accurate and effective?
- Can college students' management of their own motivation be assessed with a short self-report survey?
- Are college students with high levels of grit more motivated in their academics than students with low levels of grit? Do they use more effective study strategies?
- What are the more common and disruptive types of distractions faced by college students while studying?
- What factors help or hinder changes in college students' procrastination tendencies?
- What aspects of time-management and time-use are distinct for college students on academic probation?

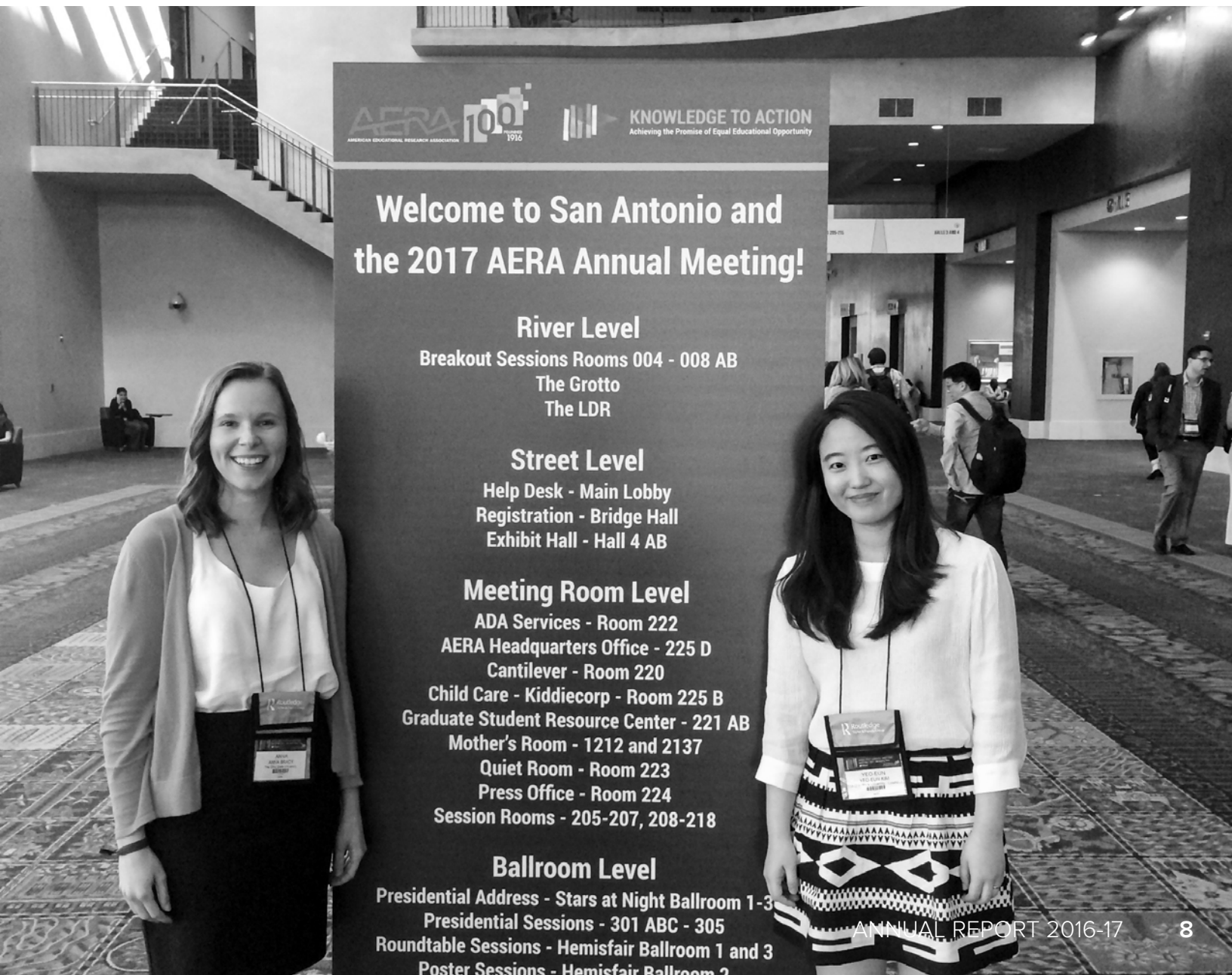
For a full listing, visit go.osu.edu/dlcresearch.

FEATURED STUDY

Does college students' time management help lower their procrastination on academic work?

Wolters, C., Won, S., and Hussain, M. (2017). Examining the relations of time management and procrastination within a model of self-regulated learning. *Metacognition and Learning*.

Most would assume that students who are effective at time management would not exhibit high levels of procrastination. After all, using time wisely and unnecessarily delaying work that needs completing appear to be directly conflicting processes. Scholarly research testing this assumption, however, has been quite limited and the object of some debate. Led by DLC members Chris Wolters and Sungjun Won, a recently published study has done much to address these issues. Based on data from large group of college students ($N = 446$), Wolters' and Won's findings showed that time management strategies such as setting priorities and establishing goals, along with favorable attitudes about organizing one's time, were important predictors of students' level of procrastination. This finding and other conclusions from the study support the self-regulated learning model used as an intervention framework within the DLC and suggest important pathways to reducing students' procrastination.



PARTNERSHIPS AND CUSTOM PROGRAMS



Samuel Rowe receives the Exemplary Service in Education Award from Nikki Radcliffe Goldsberry, associate director of MEDPATH.

The DLC team engaged in partnerships across and beyond campus to tailor our programming to suit a range of contexts.

FEATURED COLLABORATION: COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

Partnering with the College of Medicine, the Dennis Learning Center delivered five customized workshops for first- and second-year medical students. The sessions, which each had over 60 students in attendance, taught best practices for note-taking, test-taking and memorization in medical school — many of which challenged common assumptions about how learning takes place. Sessions also focused on helping students build a study regimen to increase confidence in facing upcoming academic challenges.

This was the second year we offered a series of tailored workshops for students in the medical careers pathway (MEDPATH) postbaccalaureate program. This collaboration between the DLC and the College of Medicine's Office of Diversity and Inclusion helped students apply concept mapping as a learning strategy to promote engagement with and deep processing of content in the medical school curriculum.

Based on student nominations, the DLC's head academic coach Samuel Rowe was awarded with the Exemplary Service in Education Award, in recognition of his programming for and collaboration with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. This award was established in 2012 by Dr. Leon McDougle to acknowledge the hard work and dedication exhibited by faculty, staff and students in support of the success of the MEDPATH participants.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTED PARTNERSHIPS OF 2016-17:

PRE-COLLEGE PREPARATION AND COLLEGE SUCCESS

- Worked with Metro Early College Middle School and High School administrators to develop custom workshops on memorization, stress management and time management
- Developed sessions on standardized-test preparation, writing strategies and personal learning strengths for participants in a local college and career-readiness program
- Facilitated sessions for parents on supporting motivation and college-level study strategies throughout June and July as part of University Orientation
- Met with the Engineering House Learning Community to discuss strategies for memorization
- Conducted a research-to-practice workshop on time management for students in the Second-Year Transformational Experience Program (STEP)

GRADUATE EDUCATION

- Delivered stress-management workshops for first-year graduate students in physics focused on adjusting to the demands of graduate-level scholarly inquiry
- Talked with members of the Food, Agricultural, and Biological Engineering Graduate Student Organization about how to work efficiently in graduate school and how to manage stress
- Worked jointly with the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Engineering and Office of Student Life to offer a half-day Graduate School Survival Skills event, which provided an overview of the transition to graduate school, breakout sessions featuring panels of current graduate students and presentations from campus resource representatives

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- Facilitated a two-part orientation workshop for the College of Pharmacy in which students completed a guided self-assessment of their current approaches to studying, then learned specific strategies for improving the quantity and quality of their study time
- Partnered with the College of Pharmacy to facilitate a session on effective learning models and reading strategies for professional school
- Delivered a custom presentation on professional school learning strategies for incoming students in the College of Optometry
- Facilitated a session on personal learning strengths complemented by a session on study groups for students in the College of Dentistry's DENTPATH postbaccalaureate program

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

- Collaborated with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion Young Scholars Program to create training for student mentors on motivation and resilience
- Partnered with the Young Scholars Program to join their 2016 IMPACT retreat for sophomores, encouraging students to reflect on their first year in light of research on goal setting, motivation and resilience
- Served on the advisory board for Ohio State's Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) program and taught 13 STEM Study Skills sessions to bridge program participants
- Worked with the Nisonger Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities ACE Program to offer customized programming on organization, time management and planning for students on the autism spectrum
- Collaborated with the Office of International Affairs to facilitate orientation sessions on memory tools and reading techniques, test taking, communicating with instructors and participating in class

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Training for Ohio State personnel included sessions that addressed the following topics and audiences:

- **Procrastination:** Career Counseling and Support Services
- **Transitions to College:** Fisher College of Business Undergraduate Programs and Advising
- **Self-Regulated Learning:** First-Year Experience Conference
- **Fostering Change through Academic Coaching:** Office of Diversity and Inclusion Young Scholars Program
- **Developing Resilience:** University Housing
- **Academic Support for On-Campus Residents:** University Housing
- **Referring Students to Academic Support:** Academic advisors reached via Undergraduate Education
- **Motivation and Engagement Series:** Faculty, GTAs and administrators reached in partnership with the University Center for the Advancement of Teaching
- **Supporting Student Success through the Use of Effective Study Strategies:** GTAs reached via Teaching Orientation @ Ohio State coordinated by the University Center for the Advancement of Teaching



STUDENT SUCCESS AND RETENTION

A highlight of this past year was the launch of **SpringForward**, a program developed by the University Standing Committee on Student Success and Retention's Academic Recovery and Enrichment Workgroup. Workgroup members involved in this collaborative effort represented Arts and Sciences Advising, Dennis Learning Center, Exploration Advising, First Year Experience, Office of Distance Education and eLearning, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Student Financial Aid, Undergraduate Education, and University Housing. SpringForward's initial year of spring recovery and summer enrichment included the following components:

SPRING RECOVERY COURSE

Ninety-nine students enrolled in ES EPSY 2059, Becoming a Self-Regulated Learner, during spring 2017. This two-credit, seven-week course was designed specifically for students who had experienced recent academic challenges. Main topics of the course included understanding the expectations of higher education, using campus resources effectively, building academic motivation and resilience, managing time and stress, overcoming procrastination, reading and taking notes in college and using the science of learning to enhance studying.



HOW DID STUDENTS RATE THE SPRING RECOVERY COURSE?



"My instructor made me feel like a valuable member of the class."



"The teaching methods used in this course were effective."



"I am more confident in my ability to achieve academic success after taking this course."

SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

Thirty-four students who had previously been on academic probation or warning took part in an enrichment program in summer 2017. The students received a scholarship to cover room, board, books and six credits of coursework in the second eight-week summer term. Students were also advised on work-study and other on-campus employment opportunities and encouraged to meet individually with an associate director of Student Financial Aid.

Program participants lived together in the residence hall and took part in excursions around Columbus to build group cohesion. In weekly cohort meetings, students learned about interacting with faculty, mental health and stress management, research and information literacy, holistic wellness, career exploration and development and academic planning.

Students also met with an academic coach weekly as a requirement of summer program participation. Through participation in coaching, students built on the academic skills developed in the spring semester ES EPSY 2059 class and received support applying academic success strategies to their summer coursework. Each coaching session provided a weekly time of reflection and planning to help students engage in ongoing academic development, address concerns and receive assistance connecting with additional campus resources.

A black and white photograph of three young adults, two women and one man, standing in front of a dark wooden door with a large 'X' design. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The woman on the left is wearing a dark, patterned top. The man in the center is wearing a plaid shirt. The woman on the right is wearing a light-colored, textured top.

HOW DID SPRINGFORWARD HELP STUDENTS?

"After a rough transition to college academics my freshman year, this program was the exact help and support system I needed to get back on track. I am now entering my second year feeling so much more prepared and confident, and know SpringForward was instrumental in giving me those tools to succeed. . . . I am very grateful for all the time and planning that went into the program, and would not be where I am now without this great team of coaches and advisors."

WORKSHOPS

We offered college success workshops — 45-60 minute interactive sessions designed to improve specific attitudes and skill sets — by request and through the First Year Experience Success Series.



WHAT DID STUDENTS SAY ABOUT THE WORKSHOPS THEY ATTENDED?

"It gave me the courage to challenge myself."

"I liked the various study methods that they explained so that we could choose one that best fit our habits."

"It was relatable, gave honest answers to questions and lots of tips on how to study."

"I got to take a minute to identify my stress[ors] and how I was reacting to them."

"The speaker could personally relate to the struggles that we're going through."

WHICH WORKSHOPS WERE OFFERED MOST?

Memory Tools:	24
Gearing up for Higher Education:	23
Stress Less:	20
Strategic, Confident Test-taking:	19
Personal Learning Strengths:	15
Dealing with Procrastination:	15

HOW DID STUDENTS RATE OUR WORKSHOPS?

Participants indicated "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" to the following statements about each workshop:



It was relevant to me personally.



Attending was a very positive experience.



It taught me something new.



It will help me become a more successful student.

TOGETHER, ALL OF OUR WORKSHOPS AND OTHER OUTREACH EVENTS HAD A COMBINED TOTAL AUDIENCE GREATER THAN 7,000 IN 228 SESSIONS DURING THE YEAR.

SUPPORT FOR THE DLC

The DLC is located in the Office of Student Life's Younkin Success Center along with other units dedicated to supporting students' academic and career success. Funding for our faculty, staff and core graduate teaching associate and lecturer positions comes from the College of Education and Human Ecology and Department of Educational Studies. The SpringForward program is made possible with funding from the Office of Academic Affairs, Office of Student Life and Undergraduate Education and Enrollment Services. Generous financial support from donors supports the offering of academic coaching and workshop programs.

WAYS TO SUPPORT THE DLC

The Walter E. Dennis Learning Center Endowment Fund
Fund Number: 641645 (go.osu.edu/dennisendowment)

The endowment of Walter E. Dennis Jr. and family enables the DLC's academic outreach programs to take place year after year. Income from the fund employs an undergraduate team and one part-time graduate associate to facilitate academic coaching and deliver our core set of workshops across campus.

Bruce W. Tuckman Student Enrichment Fund
Fund Number: 315444 (go.osu.edu/tuckmanfund)

This immediate-use fund, established in honor of Bruce W. Tuckman, has received donations from the family, friends, colleagues and former students of the founding director of the Dennis Learning Center. In its first year, the fund supplied an extended training period for new academic coaches and employed one part-time graduate associate to assist with special projects.



Founding director Bruce W. Tuckman brainstorming strategies for learning and motivation with graduate students



The Walter E. Dennis Learning Center is named in honor of Walter E. Dennis Jr. and family, whose endowment supports the center in its efforts to provide top-quality academic support that makes a difference in the lives of students.

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF
EDUCATION AND HUMAN ECOLOGY