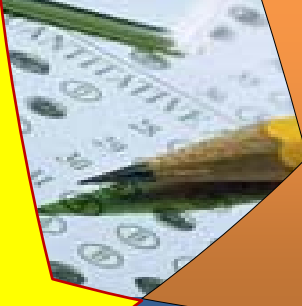




# Center for Academic Success

## Newsletter



Testing

Reading & Learning

Mathematics / Statistics

Science

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Volume 1, Issue 1: Summer 2009

## WELCOME

The Center for Academic Success welcomes all students, faculty and staff to the inaugural edition of its tri-annual newsletter. In addition to regular columns such as *In the Spotlight*, *Bookmark This* and *Calendar of Events*, the newsletter will include features and articles important to student academic success. Our readers can expect to find useful information regarding Center activities, as well as issues related to student learning and academic advancement.

We look forward to having the newsletter provide a venue for the sharing of information and new ideas as we strive to continually improve the academic support services offered to FIU students.

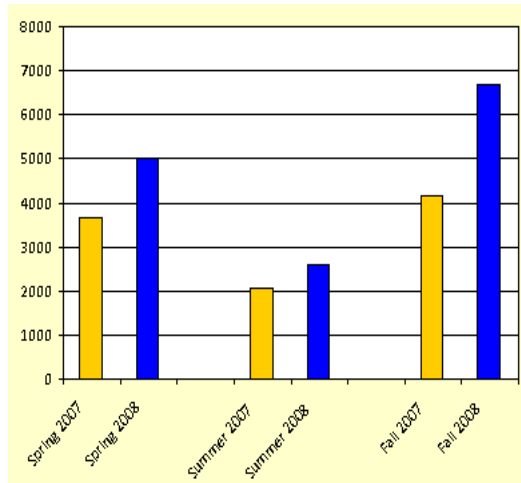
**Maria Kulick**, Director

## NEW NAME AND NEW LOCATION

In spring 2008, the University Learning Center and University Testing Center at University Park relocated from the second floor of PC to GL 120 as the newly formed Center for Academic Success. Ideally located at the entrance to the library, the Center provides students with greater accessibility to the tutoring and assessment services that enhance their academic advancement and success. A new layout, with rooms for one-on-one or small group tutoring and workshops, gives students a more comfortable and

positive learning environment. The larger space has also allowed for greater collaboration with academic departments, such as mathematics, statistics and biology, in an effort to coordinate academic support in ways that provide broader and more consistent tutoring help. The Center will continue to forge partnerships with faculty, staff and students to ensure that services remain both timely and relevant.

*The graph at right shows the increase in student visits, per thousand, since the move to GL 120 '07 - '08*



## THREE STUDY HABITS EVERY STUDENT SHOULD PRACTICE

By Kim Lumpkin, Ed.S  
Center for Academic Success

As a reading teacher and literacy coach for over 10 years, I have worked with many students to help them improve their study skills. The following are three tips I have observed to be the most helpful.



### 1. Know as much about the test or assignment as possible

This might seem obvious, but I have seen far too many students get a poor grade on a test, project, or other assignment simply because they misunderstood the directions or studied the wrong chapter or section. Most instructors appreciate it when students care enough to ask questions, so if you have the slightest doubt about what you need to do, don't hesitate to ask...it's your grade on the line!

### 2. Take advantage of your "best" time of day

Do you spring right out of bed, or does it take you a good hour or two to become fully awake in the morning? Are you ready for a nap by four in the afternoon? We all have our own pattern of restlessness, tiredness and wakefulness (aka our "circadian rhythm"); unfortunately, these patterns may not always coincide with our class, work, or study schedules. The good news is that now that you are out of high school, you have a bit more control over your time. Ideally, you should schedule your most challenging tasks for when you are most awake, and even if you can't always match it perfectly, you can avoid the most flagrant mismatches (such as studying for a physics test when you

know you'll only be half-awake!). Self-awareness is the key here.

### 3. Organize, organize, and organize

When you are already pressed for time, the last thing you need is to spend more time looking for an important paper, book, or other necessary materials. I always advise students to take advantage of any "down time" to check (and double-check!) to make sure they have what they need for the next day or the next class, and to make sure that any new assignments or handouts are immediately put away where they can be easily retrieved. We are creatures of habit, and once you accustom yourself to following a system of organization that makes sense to you, your life will become a whole lot easier.

## BOOKMARK THIS!



## STUDY SMARTER, NOT HARDER

*Math courses can be challenging for many students. When studying, there are several techniques that can be applied to improve success:*

- read math problems completely
- review previous day's notes before class
- use additional texts that give alternate explanations
- do the example problems in the text
- learn from your errors
- attend every class
- understand math vocabulary – define in your own words
- give yourself enough time to study
- find a study partner
- make an appointment with a tutor at the Center for Academic Success

*Math anxiety has more to do with feelings than ability. ...*

## FRESHMAN OR SENIOR, KNOW YOUR CLAST STATUS

Effective July 1, 2009, the College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) will no longer be available as an option to demonstrate proficiency in college-level communication and computation skills. New criteria for the fulfillment of these



requirements are currently being developed by the State University System of Florida. Knowing your status can save a great deal of unnecessary stress. There are several things that a student can do in order to find out her/his requirements:

1. **Check your SASS report.** The SASS is a student report that includes any historical CLAST activity and indicates whether any sub-tests have been fulfilled.
2. **Check with your Academic Advisor.** Your advisor is a great resource for reviewing your current status and other information useful to your academic progress.
3. **Visit the University Testing Center.** Staff at the Testing Center can give you an overview of the college-level proficiency requirements and ways in which to satisfy them in a timely manner.

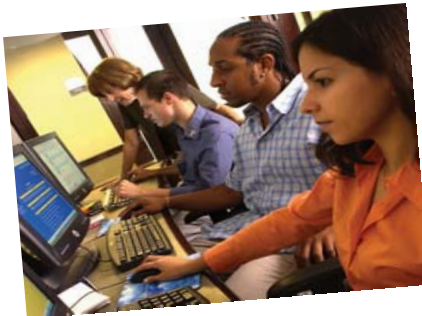
## TECHNOLOGY IN LEARNING

By Patsy Self, Ph.D.  
Center for Academic Success

Today, technology-based instruction is used for online courses and lecture support, via interactive whiteboards and notes posted on the web. However, FIU's Reading and Learning Program in Undergraduate Education alters the norm through its innovative "laptop labs." The program's promising approach to using technology is paving the way as a model for best practices in academic support.

The laptop lab is face-to-face instruction with the aid of the student's personal laptop and the instructor's media center, a SMART Board™. Students are involved in a nurturing community that fosters cognitive approaches to learning content, along with critical thinking, as they read and learn.

Student participants are self-identified laptop note-takers as opposed to paper and pencil. They download notes from the web before class, adding more notes as the professor lectures.



Students bring their laptops to the reading and learning session, and engage in discussions and critical thinking applications. Although some students prefer the traditional note-taking format, many others enjoy having the choice.

A typical laptop lab in reading and learning involves students bringing their laptop notes as well as their textbooks. Students, after being electronically given a folder of all the critical reading and learning techniques, sign up to attend four sessions. In each meeting, as a technique is taught, it is viewed on their laptops and on the SMART Board™. Students are then instructed to apply the enhanced techniques to the course material. Immediately, they receive feedback and discuss with classmates their application of new learning techniques. The listeners in the group take notes on their laptops as they see fit. The expectation in this program is that the students leave with enhanced critical thinking in reading and learning applications imbedded into their permanent laptop note-taking system. The program is still growing and adjusting to meet the needs of students.

## IF YOU KNOW THAT YOU KNOW IT ... CLEP IT.

The College Level Examination Program, or **CLEP** (as it is more commonly known), allows students to receive college level credit by demonstrating comprehensive subject-area knowledge through testing. Qualifying scores are accepted, on any one or more of the 35 CLEP examinations.

According to the College Board, more than 2,900 accredited colleges and universities, including Florida International University, will award credit for satisfactory scores on CLEP exams. By recognizing prior knowledge, these institutions allow students to advance toward their degrees while saving time and money.

Composition & Literature	FIU Course Equiv.	History & Social Sciences	FIU Course Equiv.
American Literature Eng Comp (with Essay) English Literature Humanities	Elective ENC 1101 Elective HUM 2512	American Government Hist. of the US I (Col. to 1877) Hist. of US II (1865 - present) Human Growth & Development Principles of Macroeconomics Principles of Microeconomics Introduction to Psychology Introduction to Sociology	POS 2042 AMH 2010 AMH 2020 DEP 2000 ECO 2013 ECO 2023 PSY 2020 SYG 2000
Foreign Languages	FIU Course Equiv.		
French German Spanish	FRE 1130 and/or 31 GER 1130 and/or 31 SPN 1130 and/or 31		
Science & Mathematics	FIU Course Equiv.	Business	FIU Course Equiv.
College Algebra Biology Calculus Chemistry College Math	MAC 1105 BSC UCCI (No Lab) MAC 2233 CHM UCCI (No Lab) MGF 1106	Financial Accounting Introductory Business Law Info. Systems & Computer App. Principles of Marketing Principles of Management	Elective Elective CGS 2060 Elective Elective

The above table is a sample of some of the more popular FIU, CLEP offerings and their qualifying FIU course equivalencies (subject to change). See the University Testing Center for more comprehensive CLEP information. The transfer of CLEP credits should always be discussed with an academic advisor.

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

**Patsy Self, Ph.D.**, contributed as one of the chapter authors for the textbook, *Teaching for Change: Voices of Empowerment and Transformation*, published by Pen and Publish Education Press. The text was picked up by the University of Pennsylvania as required reading for the Penn Literacy Network (PLN) field course for professional development in the school districts. It is also used in various other universities' diversity, adult education and reading programs as required or suggested reading. The text is written for pre-service and in-service teachers who teach in urban settings.



Each chapter captures the theoretical framework of discourse in a multicultural educational setting. It is a lively text promoting self-empowerment within class discussions, readings, and writing assignments. Venturing beyond the trends and scripts of traditional minority groups such as African Americans and Hispanic Americans, the book embraces all minority groups. It speaks to the voices that have thus far been silenced and guides them to empowerment and transformation. Patsy Self, Ph.D. has two articles, co-authored with Charlene Eberly, due to appear in fall 2009 and spring 2010 in a peer-reviewed journal of literacy. The topics of the two articles are, respectively, teaching critical thinking through reading, and writing for first year college students: from theory to practice.

**Ive Barreiros**, our Biscayne Bay campus Math/Stat Faculty and Academic coordinator, attended the 2008 meeting on *Statistics Applied to Psychology*, held at the School of Psychology of the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina, on December 7 and 8. There, she presented a paper, "The Cochran-Mosteller-Tukey Evaluation of the Kinsey Report Revisited," accepted in the Ethics of Research category. The article revisits the assessment of a committee especially appointed by the American Association of Statistics, regarding Alfred Kinsey's book, *The Sexual Behavior of the Human Male*, published in 1948.



The historical evaluators -- three of the most recognized statisticians of that time: William G. Cochran, Frederik Mosteller, and John Tukey -- critically examined the methodology of the research while maintaining a somewhat benevolent attitude, justifying mistakes of the researcher given the circumstances and the nature of the investigation. In spite of objections of a statistical nature, the "Kinsey Report" had great influence on the education of adolescents and children, laws on sexual offenses and even the private behavior of many Americans. Over time, many analysts have been discovering more and more details on Kinsey's modus operandi, and the influence his own personality exercised into his work. Barreiros' article analyzes the original assessment and raises questions about whether the Statistical Committee should have clarified, while using statistical means, a more open and clear set of serious objections, both technical and ethical, to the "Kinsey Report."



### CENTER FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

UP- GL 120: (Testing Center) 305 348-2840 (Learning Center) 305 348-2180

BBC- ACI 160: (Testing Center) 305 919-5803 (Learning Center) 305 919-5927

<http://testing.fiu.edu>

<http://learningcenter.fiu.edu>

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