

**Inside this issue:**

- ◆ Letter From the Director 1
- ◆ Tutoring:  
A Pathway to Academic Success 2
- ◆ Writing Across the Curriculum Center 3
- ◆ Needed Math Help is on the Way 4, 5
- ◆ Did You Say, "TEST!"?
- ◆ Meet Some of Our Tutors 6
- And
- ◆ Get to Know Our Tutoring Philosophy

# Academic Support Center Newsletter

*The Path To Academic Success*



October 2014 Volume 1, Issue 1

## Letter From the Director

Greetings! I am excited that the Academic Support Center newsletter is "hitting the stands" and sharing the great work that happens every day in the tutoring center for our HCC students.

Stephen Covey wrote in his book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, "Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply." At the ASC, tutors are trained in the importance of listening which they do when students come with concerns about homework, practice problems, or a paper that needs to be written.

This semester, the ASC is rich with skilled staff and abundant resources for every kind of HCC learner. Twenty professional tutors and twelve student tutors make up the fall 2014 staff. Join me in welcoming the following new members to the ASC family:

- ◆ Aliss Obeid was hired during the summer to work as the Tutoring Coordinator. Her office is B135 and you can reach her by calling 332- 5992.
- ◆ Tyler Mokarry, Lamar Lloyd, and Ernst Angrand are tutoring math for the first time in the ASC.
- ◆ Monique Wilson and Karen Vo are new to tutoring biology, chemistry, and statistics.
- ◆ Cynthia Boynton, Stephen Tower, and Morgan Dancy (volunteer) are tutoring in the Writing Center.
- ◆ Reem Nahlawi will tutor Arabic.
- ◆ Zuleika Nieves will work with the Criminal Justice faculty to tutor students taking the Writing for Law Enforcement class.

Students are our priority. From our very fast-paced lives, tutors provide a place to slow down, be heard and create a plan for success. Supporting students is what we love to do and so many students benefit! Best wishes for a successful and healthy semester.

Marianne Tecun,  
Director, Academic Support Center

## Tutoring: A Pathway to Academic Success

**S**ome might see tutoring simply as a trend, an insignificant educational accessory, or an unnecessary service that suggests failing. This is a misunderstanding of what tutoring is and its value and importance. Here at the tutoring center at HCC, we provide the opportunity of a rich experience that manifests the value of our tutoring services.

### Q 1: What Is Tutoring?

*A: Tutoring is a very ancient educational practice; actually, it might be one of the earliest methods of teaching. The word tutor in the dictionary is defined as: “A. a private instructor. B. One that gives additional, special, or remedial instruction” And “a trainer, coach, guardian, protector, caretaker.” Tutoring also means responsibility, commitment, and patience. Besides, it requires special skills and knowledge of the subject area.*

### Q 2: Is tutoring really important?

*A: Tutoring is significantly important as it assists students to become better and more independent learners and to reach their potential. In other words, it's a path to academic success. The fundamental*



*goal of tutoring is to empower, support, and motivate students to “pursue academic excellence”.*

### Q 3: Who really benefits from tutoring?

*A: Students, tutors, and the college benefit from tutoring*

#### **I. Students** benefit from tutoring because it:

- meets individual needs.
- develops learning skills.
- improves academic performance and skills.
- promotes self-esteem.
- encourages a positive attitude towards the subject.

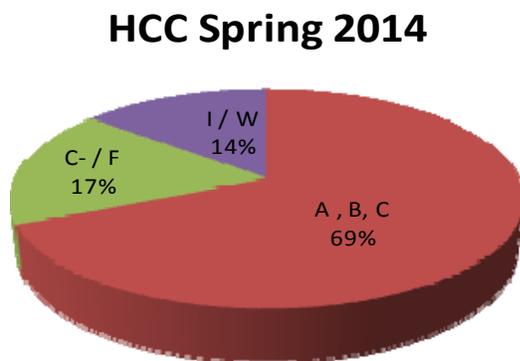
#### **II. Tutors** benefit from tutoring because it:

- improves communication and organizational skills.
- stimulates higher thinking.
- increases knowledge of the subject.
- generates self-satisfaction because it's rewarding to help others.

#### **III. The college** benefits from tutoring because it:

- enhances the educational environment.
- increases enrollment and retention of students.
- promotes higher academic standards.

The chart shows the success rate of the students who visited the tutoring center at HCC in the spring 2014 semester.



Aliss Obeid  
Tutoring Coordinator

Sources: [cowley.edu](http://cowley.edu),  
[westwood.edu](http://westwood.edu),  
[ltconline.net](http://ltconline.net),  
[merriam-webster.com](http://merriam-webster.com)



## *I love math, but I need help!!!*

### Needed Math Help is on the Way

In college, most learning takes place outside of the classroom (“two hours of homework for every hour in class”). This is especially true in math. Math students need to do it on their own in order to make it their own. In other words, they need time to assimilate what they experience in the classroom by doing problems themselves, making mistakes along the way, and learning from them. They need to ponder a problem, attempt a solution, and if that attempt doesn’t work, try something else... then try again... and again. This method, often referred to as “productive struggle”, is an important part of the math learning process. But when the struggle continues for too long, it can become unproductive. Students become frustrated and stop trying.

When a student nears the point of frustration, getting help can make the difference between continuing productively and giving up. Often, a brief consultation with a math tutor is all that’s needed.

Math tutors are currently available in The Academic Support Center during almost all open hours.

Right now, there are two ways for students to get math help:

- 1) Make an appointment for a half-hour one-on-one session with a particular tutor by coming in or calling 203-332-5019.
- 2) Drop in during Mega Math—no appointment needed—on Tuesdays 9:00-12:30 or Fridays 9-4.

Our tutors are knowledgeable and trained to help students overcome their difficulties and learn from their mistakes. Some tutors specialize in Elementary and Intermediate Algebra (**MAT095 and MAT137**), while others specialize in Statistics (**MAT167**) or College Algebra and above (**MAT172, 186, etc.**).

..... (to be continued on page 5)

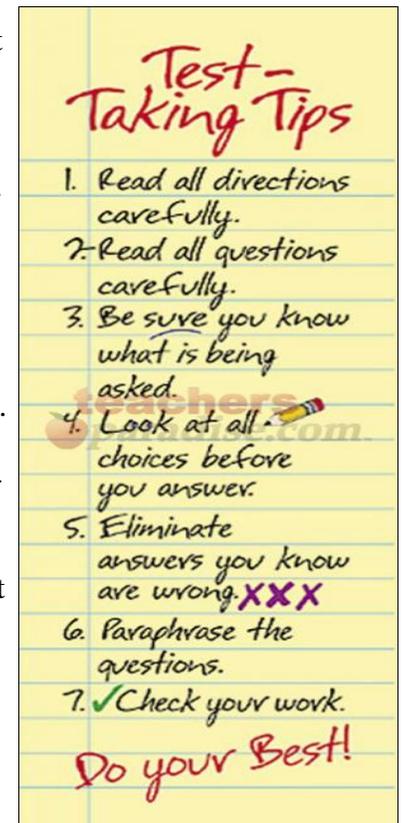
## Did You Say, “TEST!”?

“*Test.*” The word alone instills fear in the minds of all who just hear or read it! But when you get past the initial gasp of the word “test” you may come to understand that the mere goal of a test is to act as a measure of knowledge, ability, experience or accomplishment. A mechanic tests a car’s brakes, for example, as he or she services it to make sure their work is correct and ultimately that the passenger is safe... mission accomplished. A chef tastes the soup as he or she creates it to make sure the texture and flavor are ideal and ultimately that the consumer enjoys it... mission accomplished.

Now, bear in mind that the mechanic began with “mechanics 101” to first learn about the tools, the car parts, etc. in order to be an accomplished mechanic. And the chef began with “chefs 101” to first learn about the utensils, the spices, etc. in order to be an accomplished chef. Similarly, at HCC one must start with the basics and evolve to meet his/her goal. The testing center at HCC administers a variety of tests to help each student reach that goal.

Most students are familiar with the *placement test* administered prior to enrollment, which continues to be required, but HCC has coordinated with the new **CAP** Center. The CAP center provides a workshop which is an addition to the placement testing process and which helps .....

(to be continued on page 5)



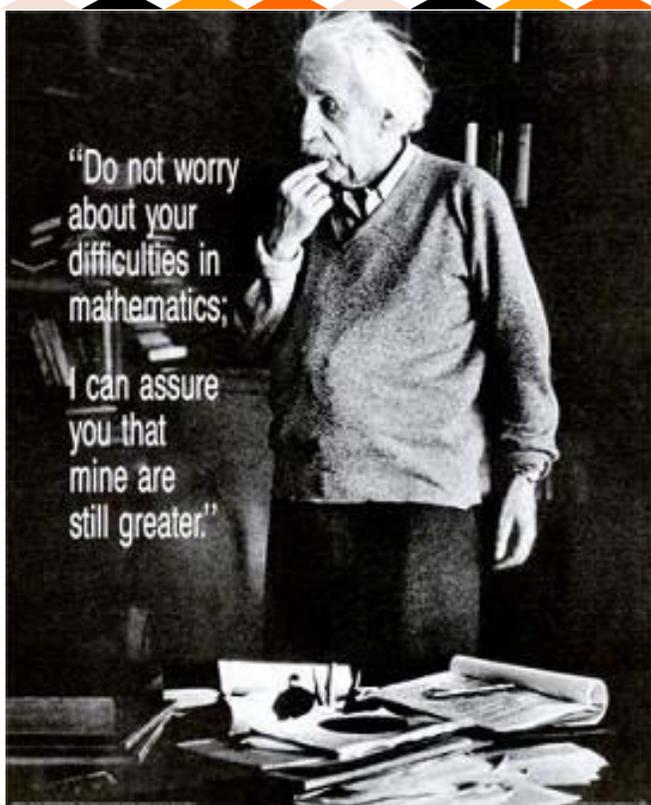
## *I love math, but I need help!!!*

### **Needed Math Help is on the Way**

Students are assigned tutors according to the courses they are currently taking.

We want to provide more (and more immediate) help for our math students at all levels. E-tutoring is provided with a 24-hour turnaround, but not all students respond to the online environment. So, we are planning some changes in the ASC. After the Thanksgiving break this semester, there will no longer be scheduled appointments. Instead, all math tutors will be available for drop-in tutoring during their regularly-scheduled hours. This will allow more students to come in when they need help, get their questions answered right away, and continue on a productive path.

*Theodora Benezra*  
Assistant Professor, Mathematics



## **Did You Say, “TEST!”?**

students prepare to place into appropriate level classes commensurate with their ability.

Subsequent to the placement test, and ideally during the first semester of study, the testing center administers the Computer Literacy Exam. Passing this exam demonstrates that each graduate of HCC has a command of basic computer literacy skills, an ever growing requisite in most professional settings. This continues to be a requirement in order to graduate for all students, unless the student has a Code “C” course as part of their degree program.

For those students who have accumulated knowledge through educational and/or professional experiences, HCC offers **CLEP** exams and **DSST** exams, which can save time and money. Thirty three specific CLEP exams and thirty eight unique DSST exams are offered in areas of composition, literature, science, math, world languages, history, business, humanities, and technology, collectively. A satisfactory score on each exam can earn as many as 12 credits and fulfill required courses. The fee for a CLEP or DSST exam is a fraction of the cost of tuition and saves the time required of a traditional semester class. CLEP and DSST exams are a great option for students with advanced knowledge of a particular subject or subjects.

**Make-up exams** are one more service provided by testing services. Instructors must first approve a make-up exam and fill out appropriate paperwork. Students may then, after instructor approval, sign up for a make-up test at testing services.

It’s important to remember while navigating through the different testing services—some required, others optional—that they are merely tools designed to help you achieve your goals at HCC so you, too, may ultimately say, “... mission accomplished”.

*Vickie Fabrizio*  
Testing Assistant/Placement Testing

## Meet Some of Our Tutors and Get to Know Our Tutoring Philosophy

**A**t the Academic Support Center, our tutoring staff is committed to help our students reach their best potential. We value our students, and we strive to meet each individual's needs. Our tutors, both peer tutors and master tutors, are friendly, fluent in the subjects they tutor, and well-trained to provide a productive and supportive educational environment.

Meet some of our tutors and read some quotes that express the ASC philosophy.



**Tajan Marshall**  
Math tutor



**Tyler Mokarry**  
Math tutor



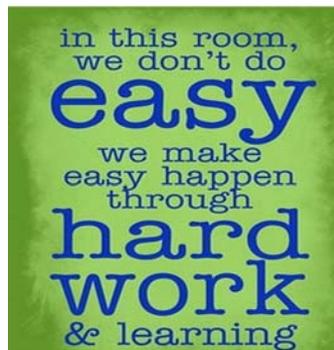
**Cynthia Wolfe Boynton**  
English, WACC tutor



**Lamar Lloyd**  
Math tutor



**Mike Bonini**  
Math tutor



**Gigi Yanez-Hamberger**  
ESL, Spanish tutor



**English & WACC tutors**  
From right to left: Sherly Montes, Karyn Smith, Ed Fians, and Tichina Pemberton—a former tutor

