The Benefits of Transitioning from Tutoring to Collaborative Study

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Take-Aways

• The difference between CS and tutoring
• Bigger goals of CS vs. tutoring
• Lessons learned
• Best practices
TIP Scholars

• TIP’s mission: To transform the learning experience so students can pursue their individual potentials. All students are empowered to transform their world for the better.

• How we do that
  – Peer mentoring
  – Linked classes
    • Critical thinking course
  – Dedicated academic advisors
  – Building community
  – Collaborative Studies
Peer Tutoring

• Sessions run by peer mentors
• Training as mentors, not as tutors
• Rough numbers: 600-700 contact hours per semester (AY 2013-14)
• Course and instructor specific
Why the change to CSS

• Growth of cohort size
  – Inability to serve large #s of students with same/decreased resources
• Underutilization of tutoring
• Lack of long-range planning in best interest of students
• Tutoring targets high-risk students, not high-risk courses or high-risk university expectations
  – Students less likely to view CSS as remedial
CSS Goals

• Focus on critical thinking and transferrable skills
• Focus on the bigger picture
  – Emphasize connections
  – Prove understanding
• Emphasize discipline, preparation, & application
• Build confidence, perseverance, & resilience
• Add value at every opportunity
• Empower students to become self-sufficient learners & leaders
• Be okay with making mistakes
A Typical Week

CH 301 CA
• Attend CH 301 lecture
• Facilitate 2-3 (2 hour) sessions of CH 301 collaborative studies
• Attend CH 301 discussion
  – Serve as undergraduate TA during discussion
• Monthly training
• Check in with Lead CA
• Meet with CH 301 instructor and other CH 301 CAs

CH 301 Tutor
• Attend CH 301 lecture
• Tutor 2-3 (2 hour) sessions of CH 301
What We’re Seeing Now

• Rough numbers:
  – Fall 2014: 2580 unique visits
  – Spring 2015: 1949 unique visits
  – Fall 2015: 1268 unique visits, as of mid-October

• Closer ties between faculty, peer leaders, and program staff

• Faculty have greater buy-in and involvement

• Attitude and mindset (just reaching turning point)

• Part of TIP culture
Institutional Benefits

- Broader benefits in HS to college transition
- Addresses possible/probably stumbling blocks
- Helps address the post 2nd year attrition
Academic Benefits

• Building community
• Transferrable skills
• Opportunities for
  – Self-assessment
  – Self-monitoring
• Prep for post-baccalaureate life
Leadership Development Benefits

• Becoming a Course Assistant (CA)
  – Peer leader
  – Interpersonal skills
  – Problem-solving

• Lead CA
  – Trainings
  – Observations
  – Hiring process
  – Course-specific teams

• Close work with faculty
Training

• NSC 109: Intro to Leading Collaborative Studies
• Lead CAs
• New interviewing format
• Monthly training topics:
  – Learning theory concepts: retrieval practice, spacing and interleaving
  – Exam review protocols and best practices
  – How to help students without merely giving answers
  – How to help first-year students prepare for final exams
Course Topics

- Group learning philosophy
- Team building
- Creating community
- Failure and mindset
- Ethics and leadership
- Cultural competency
- Building connections with peers and instructors
- Flipped classrooms
- Socratic Method
- Creating independent learners
Assessment

• Peer-to-peer
• Observations
• Sign ins
• Professor feedback
• Student feedback
Lessons Learned

• How to talk about it
• Importance of multi-pronged marketing approach
• Setting expectations
• Adjusting vs. staying-the-course
Best Practices

• Clear and consistent expectations
• Training for CAs
• Instructor and program involvement
  – Instructors can tailor to a degree
• CSS is part of every conversation