



PLUS | Program Leading
to University Success
Eastern Washington University

start something **big**

PLUS Program Executive Summary

Academic Year 2016-2017

Prepared by the PLUS Staff

PLUS Mission: To enhance the quality of university student scholarship and support the achievement of students' academic and career goals through peer-based collaborative study groups, one-on-one tutoring, eTutoring, and student success programming

EWU expands opportunities for personal transformation through excellence in learning.

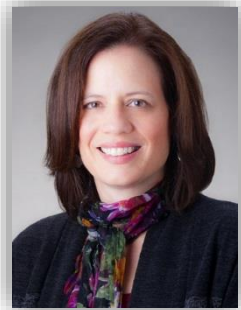
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Professional Staff 2016-2017

Director

Michelle Galey



Retention Specialists

Caroline Dias, One-On-One Tutoring

Alyson Rode, Study Groups



Graduate Student Program Specialists

Jocelyn Brown – Graduate Student Assistant (GSA)

Madeline Greaves – Program Specialist



Program Overview and History

The *Program Leading to University Success* (PLUS) is an academic support program that first began offering study groups to students at Eastern Washington University in the fall of 1992; it is based on a model of peer-assisted study sessions called Supplemental Instruction (SI) created by Dr. Deanna Martin at the University of Missouri Kansas-City in 1973.

Study groups are typically offered for 100 and 200 level courses that have been identified as being historically difficult for students based on the rate of D, W, and F course grades received, as well as student and faculty feedback.

In the fall of 2010, contract-based, one-on-one tutoring was introduced, and in the winter of 2011, the PLUS program joined the Western eTutoring Consortium, providing our students online access to tutors at colleges and universities across the Western United States.

In 2012 PLUS moved to the main floor of JFK Library to serve as a partner in the Learning Commons, a dynamic and free-form student learning space containing moveable whiteboard tables, chairs and rolling whiteboards.



Extended evening hours were added in 2015. In October of 2016, library management was restructured to include the Learning Commons and specifically the PLUS program.

CRLA Certification and Training

PLUS is internationally certified through the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) for tutor training through levels I, II, and III. Each training session covers a student success strategy and best practice that can be implemented and/or shared with peers in tutoring or study group sessions, including but not limited to the following topics:

Time Management	Critical Thinking
Effective Communication	Goal Setting
Campus Resources	Test Anxiety
Active Learning	Learning Styles
Probing Questions	Study Skills

One-on-one tutors and study group facilitators are required to complete Levels I and II. To become a certified tutor for either level, they must complete 10 training hours and meet a minimum of 25 student contact hours per quarter. Upon completion of the requirements, the students receive a certificate that can be added to a professional portfolio.

Some tutors/facilitators choose to pursue their Level III certificate to become a Master Tutor/Facilitator, completing course or discipline-specific resource guides for future peer leaders so they can “pay it forward” and knowledge is maintained in staffing transitions when they graduate.

In 2016-2017, 58 student employees completed, at the minimum, Level 1 training totaling 534 contact hours.

Student Employment Guidelines

Requirements

Student employees who apply, interview, and are hired as facilitators and/or tutors through the PLUS program received at least a 3.3 in the course, maintain a 3.3 or higher overall GPA, have sophomore standing or higher, and have received a faculty recommendation. They demonstrate leadership qualities, excellent communication skills, and a willingness to help others.

Supervision

Student employees are directly supervised by one or two retention specialists who coordinate PLUS services. Graduate students may assist as needed.

Assessment

Student employees must attend certified CRLA training sessions in their first quarter of employment to gain proficiency in their peer support role by learning best practices.

To assess whether these best practices are being implemented in learning sessions, retention specialists and graduate students conduct quarterly observations of student employees when they are in a session. A performance rubric is utilized (see Appendix) and an observation follow-up meeting is scheduled for 15 minutes in which the direct supervisor reviews the rubric with the

student employee and identifies what went well in the session and what can improve.

Additionally, students attending study group and tutoring sessions are asked to complete mid-quarter and end-of-quarter surveys (see Appendix) providing both quantitative and qualitative data on the efficacy and quality of service provided by PLUS. The complete results of each survey are provided to facilitators and tutors respectively via email. Any names provided within the comments are removed prior to dissemination.

Yearly Program Highlights

Tutor and Facilitator of the Month

The PLUS staff helped determine which outstanding office aides, tutors and facilitators would be recognized as recipients of the Facilitator or Tutor of the Month certificates. They received a copy of their certificate, and also took a photo with their supervisor to be posted on the Learning Commons Facebook site.



GRE Prep Seminar

PLUS sponsored a GRE exam preparation seminar in both the fall and spring quarters led by Dr. Julia Smith, a faculty member in the Anthropology department. In total, 137 students attended with 602 total contact hours, which is over a 50% increase of what we saw in 2015-16.

	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Totals
Students Attending	50	87	137
Contact Hours	205	397	602

Service Presentations and Tabling

In the Fall of 2016 and Spring of 2017, PLUS staff presented on academic success strategies to freshman and sophomore student athletes attending the Life Skills I and II courses, led by Jim Fitzgerald.

In 2016-2017, professional staff and graduate students tabled and/or presented at many events on campus, including firstSTEP, Running Start orientation, Neighborfest, and Admitted Student Days.

Study Groups Summary

Study groups are peer-facilitated collaborative learning sessions for a given course. They occur twice per week (50 minutes each) on a drop-in basis in the Learning Commons of JFK Library or in classrooms across campus.



Study group facilitators integrate content and learning strategies into their sessions, including a review of lecture notes, textbook readings, problem-solving exercises, and pair or team-based activities that promote active learning and collaboration. They do not re-lecture or introduce new material but rather add structure to study group sessions.

Student attendees gain confidence in mastering content, develop critical thinking skills, learn how to ask questions of their peers and instructors, and apply new learning strategies. Like other supplemental instruction styled programs, PLUS study groups target courses rather than specific student populations and attract students from differing ability and culture groups.

Students can attend, however, any sessions they choose during the quarter as attendance is not mandatory.

“All of the material covered was relevant, my understanding of the material grew as time went on, and the overall friendly environment helped me express my knowledge and shortcomings as well as helping other students.” – Mid-Quarter Survey Response, Fall 2016

One-On-One Tutoring Summary

Students interested in receiving one-on-one tutoring assistance complete a [request form on the PLUS website](#) and agree to the terms of the tutoring agreement. In short, they must come to all scheduled sessions on time and prepared with questions and any course materials (textbook, class notes, etc.) that are necessary for the tutor to best assist them.

The tutor and tutee meet two to three hours a week, which is equal to a 20 to 30 hour commitment for the quarter. A minimum of 15 tutoring hours are required to meet contract.

All tutoring sessions occur in the Learning Commons. Students are assigned to an available tutor and most communicate via phone, text, or email prior to sessions. Many request the same tutor to assist them in a course sequence the following quarter.



“I have been doing better on my tests and actually grasping something from the tutor sessions and working harder with the extra motivation.” – Mid-Quarter Survey Response, Winter 2017

Program Assessment Academic Year 2016-2017

Objectives – Study Groups

- Serve 2,000 students
- Employ 30 facilitators per quarter
- Provide 30 study groups per quarter
- Partner with 35 faculty members
- Facilitators will complete CRLA training
- Students that attend five or more sessions in a quarter will average a 0.5 or higher course grade than their peers in the course who do not attend
- The rate of DWF grades for students attending study groups will be lower than that of students who do not attend

Objectives – One-On-One Tutoring

- Serve 200 students
- Employ 30 tutors per quarter
- Maintain 100 contracts per quarter
- Tutors will complete CRLA training
- Most students who meet the tutoring contract (15+ hours) will pass their course with a 2.0 or higher
- Most students who are retaking a course and meet the contract will pass their course with a 2.0 or higher
- There will be a steady increase in the number of new users and repeat users will be retained.

Outcomes for Both Services

- Students will find the peer assistance provided by PLUS to be effective and meet their needs
- Facilitators and tutors will implement best practices for student success in their sessions through:
 - Encouraging active and independent learning
 - Fostering collaboration among student peers
 - Helping develop critical thinking and reasoning skills
- On a scale of 1 to 5, Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, student responses to the following survey questions will average a score of 4 or higher:
 - I leave PLUS study groups/tutoring sessions feeling better about the material and my own abilities
 - Participating in PLUS study groups/tutoring is really helping me improve my grade
- In the summer session, limited academic support services will be provided to students in chemistry and mathematics, the highest need disciplines at EWU.

Results – Study Groups

- Served 2,060 students, employed 119 facilitators, provided 140 study groups, and partnered with 146 faculty members
- All facilitators completed CRLA training
- Students who attended 5+ sessions per quarter achieved a course grade difference of **0.52** compared to their peers in class who did not attend*
 - *While a direct causal link cannot be drawn between session attendance and course grades, the results are still suggestive. It is also recognized that motivation may serve as a mediating factor.
- The PLUS course grade average (5+ sessions) was a **3.10**, with the non-PLUS average equaling 2.58 and the overall course average equaling 2.67
- The overall PLUS DWF rate was **12%** and the non-PLUS DWF rate* was 23%
 - *Number of students in course who obtained D, W, and F grades relative to total number

2016-2017 PLUS Study Groups Academic Year Summary

Category	Fall 2016	Winter 2017	Spring 2017	Total
# Total Individual Students Served †	760	706	594	2,060
# Individual Students Served*	664	578	477	1,719
# Faculty Assisted	45	48	53	146
# Group Facilitators	38	36	45	119
# Total Study Groups Offered †	43	48	49	140
# Study Groups Offered	32	29	33	94
# Study Group Sessions	635	723	814	2,172
Student Contact Hours	2,649	2,656	2,533	7,838
% Students Attending Study Groups*	22%	23%	23%	23%
PLUS (All Attending) Course Grade Average	2.85	2.94	3.01	2.93
Non-PLUS Course Grade Average	2.53	2.56	2.64	2.58
Course Average	2.58	2.71	2.73	2.67
PLUS (All Attending) Grade Difference	0.32	0.38	0.37	0.36
PLUS (5+ Sessions) Course Grade Average	3.04	3.05	3.20	3.10
Non-PLUS Course Grade Average	2.53	2.56	2.64	2.58
PLUS (5+ Sessions) Grade Difference	0.51	0.49	0.56	0.52
% PLUS DWF Rate	18%	8%	10%	12%
% Non-PLUS DWF Rate	25%	18%	21%	23%

*Of the students enrolled in courses included in the analysis, †Includes low attendance study groups and incompletes (ended early in quarter)

Results – One-On-One Tutoring

- Served 451 total students, employed 124 tutors, and maintained 424 active contracts out 494 total.
- All tutors completed CRLA training
- **84%** of students who met contract received a passing grade of 2.0 or higher
- **81%** of students who met contract and were retaking a course passed with a 2.0 or higher
- There was a 57% increase in the number of new service users over the course of the academic year, and we maintained 32% of previous service users.

2016-2017 One-On-One Tutoring Academic Year Summary

Category	Fall 2016	Winter 2017	Spring 2017	Total
Total Individual Students Served ✦	126	155	170	451
# Active Students Served *	101	128	149	378
Total Number of Contracts ✦	139	173	182	494
# Active Contracts *	116	144	164	424
Number of Tutors	36	46	42	124
Total Hours of Tutoring	1,894	2,294	2,376	6,564
Mean Hours Per Student	15	15	13	15
Total Requests Received	243	278	294	815
Students Who Met Contract (15+ Hrs)	63	69	61	193
Students Who Did Not Meet Contract	53	75	111	239
Met Contract with Passing Grade	55	55	52	162
% Met Contract with Passing Grade	87%	80%	85%	84%
Met Contract, Course Retake ❖	15	13	19	47
Met Contract, Course Retake, Passing Grade (2.0 or higher)	12	10	16	38
% Met Contract, Course Retake, Passing Grade (2.0 or higher)	80%	77%	84%	81%
Withdraws/Drops/Other Cases	31	34	46	111

❖For each course a student receives assistance in

*Active contracts run the whole length of the quarter

✦A course retake is self-reported by students when filling out the online tutor request form

Results for Both Services

- In total, PLUS served the needs of **2,511** students at Eastern Washington University
- **500** students responded to mid-quarter and end-of-quarter surveys. Our response rate was 20%.
 - The average response to the question, “I leave PLUS study groups/tutoring sessions feeling better about the material and my own abilities” was a **4.4/5**
 - The average response to the question, “Participating in PLUS study groups/tutoring is really helping me improve my grade” was a **4.6/5**

Conclusions

Every year the PLUS team seeks to improve the delivery of academic support services to our students at EWU. We continue to see steady interest and often growing demand for the use of PLUS services. Increased marketing at freshman and transfer student events, as well as referrals from campus partners and fellow students, helps to maintain student awareness and exposure of services.

The continued support of executive level administrators at EWU is an integral part of maintaining the quality and quantity of support we provide to students. This includes professional development opportunities on and off campus at conferences, committees, and so on.

We continue to shape and reshape our program into the 2017-2018 academic year, being mindful of the student success initiatives to be implemented as part of the EWU Strategic Plan.

Appendix

1. CRLA Certification
2. Direct Observation Rubric
3. Mid/End Quarter Survey Questions
4. DWF Grade Comparison Graph



International Tutor Training
Program Certification

Program ID #: US-WA-0937

Eastern Washington University

Cheney, Washington Campus

Program Leading to University Success (PLUS)

and authorizes the above program to issue certificates to tutors meeting its CRLA-approved requirements for the following program certification level(s):

Level I Certified Tutor, Level II Advanced Certified Tutor

Valid: 01/13/2016 – 01/13/2019

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Dorothy Bugg', written over a horizontal line.

CRLA President 2015-2016

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Robata Schotka', written over a horizontal line.

ITTPC Coordinator



International Tutor Training
Program Certification

Program ID #: US-WA-0967

Eastern Washington University

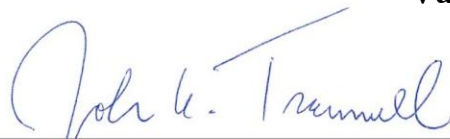
Cheney, Washington

Program Leading to University Success (PLUS)

is hereby awarded tutor training program certification and is authorized to issue certificates to tutors meeting its CRLA-approved requirements for the following program certification level(s):

Level III Master Certified Tutor

Valid: 01/01/2017 – 12/31/2017


CRLA President 2016-2017


ITTPC Coordinator

Direct Observation Rubric

Session Criteria	Seen: Yes/ No/ N/A	Comments
A. Beginning the Session:		
1) Arrives on or ahead of time and appears prepared		
2) Attempts to establish or maintain rapport with student through warmth and positivity		
3) Refers to agenda and discusses a Study Skill or Resource		
B. Working Through the Session:		
4) As appropriate, ensures that the student has attempted the homework independently		
5) Uses active and collaborative learning (including board work & practice problems, and team work)		
6) Uses open ended questioning		
7) Psychologically attends to student & provides positive feedback		
8) Uses active listening		
9) Refers student to notes, text, and professors and other resources		
10) Concludes session with productive interaction: summary, goal setting, appointment confirmation, etc.		

PLUS Mid-Quarter and End-of-Quarter Student Survey Questions 2016-2017

To Note: GoogleForms was used to create and distribute the surveys. The link was shortened and customized using www.tinyurl.com to create an alias.

1. Who is your group facilitator/tutor?
2. What course are you attending a PLUS Group/tutoring for?
3. Which instructor are you taking the course with?
4. What other resources, if any, are you using besides PLUS Groups/tutoring to help you succeed in this course?
5. About how many times have you attended PLUS Groups/tutoring this quarter?
 - a. 1-3
 - b. 4-6
 - c. 7-9
 - d. 10+
6. Choose the statement that best describes your PLUS Groups/tutoring attendance:
 - a. I only attend when the facilitator/tutor is having an exam/test review.
 - b. I attend sporadically, whenever I get a chance.
 - c. I attend constantly on particular days, trying to keep a schedule.
 - d. I attend regularly, but not on any particular schedule.
 - e. Other
7. If you answered "Other" to the previous question, please describe:
8. When did you begin attending PLUS Groups/tutoring this quarter?
 - a. At the beginning of the quarter (weeks 1-4)
 - b. In the middle of the quarter (weeks 5-7)
 - c. At the end of the quarter (weeks 8-10)
9. Why did you begin attending PLUS Groups/tutoring? (check all that apply)
 - a. I heard about it in class from the facilitator/tutor, and it sounded helpful.
 - b. I heard about it in class from my professor, and it sounded helpful.
 - c. I heard about it from other students in the class, and I think it sounded helpful.
 - d. I am having difficulty understanding the material by just going to class.
 - e. I think it will be a good idea to get some additional support.
 - f. I think it will be a good idea in preparation for upcoming exams/tests.
 - g. To get extra credit from my professor.
 - h. Other

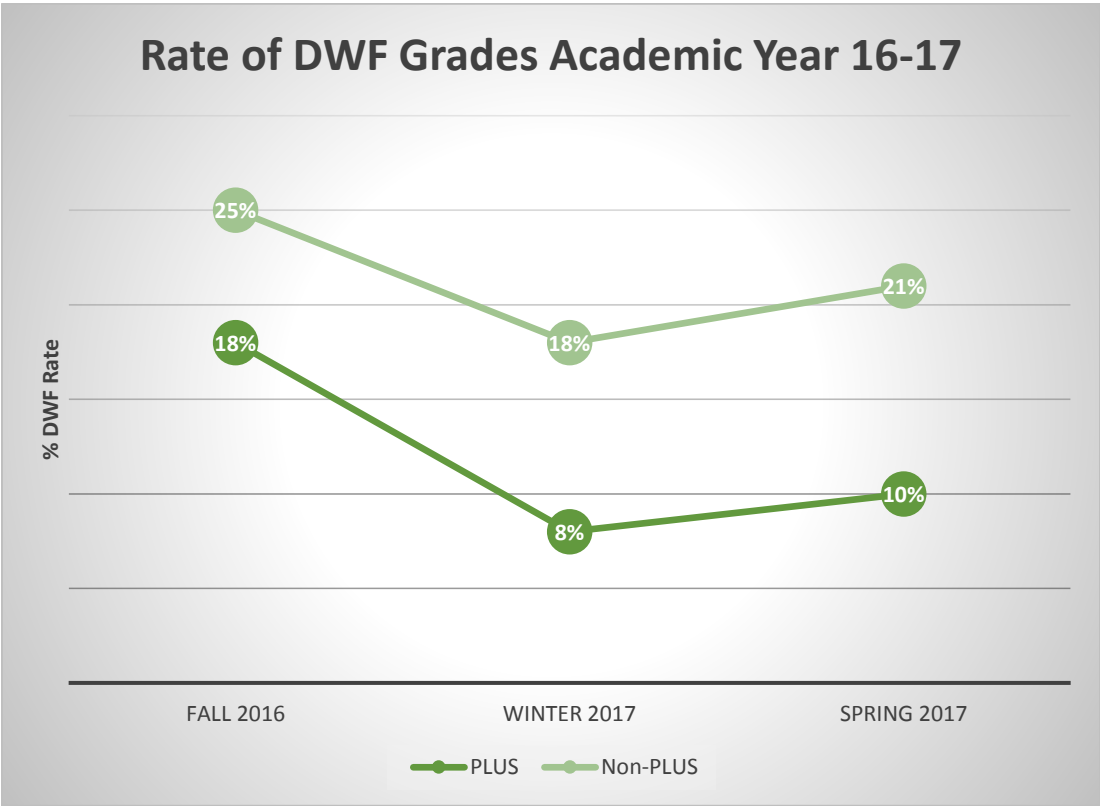
On a Scale of 1 to 5, 1: Strongly Disagree, 5: Strongly Agree

10. My facilitator/tutor makes me feel welcome/comfortable in her/his sessions.
11. I can easily approach my facilitator/tutor and ask questions.
12. My facilitator/tutor incorporates learning techniques into her/his sessions.
13. I can apply the learning techniques I am learning in PLUS Groups/tutoring to help me with other courses.
14. I understand the course material better because of how the PLUS Groups are conducted.
15. It would be better if PLUS Groups/tutoring sessions were longer than 50 minutes.
16. I enjoy the collaborative, peer-oriented environment that PLUS Groups/tutoring creates.
17. I leave PLUS Group/tutoring sessions feeling better about the material and my own abilities.
18. Participating in PLUS Groups/tutoring is not really helping me improve my grade.

Short Answer

19. What does your facilitator/tutor do particularly well that allowed you to feel more comfortable with learning the material?
20. What is one thing your facilitator/tutor could improve on?
21. List two things you really enjoy about the PLUS Groups/tutoring program.
22. Would you more regularly attend PLUS Group/tutoring sessions in the future, if they were offered on evenings (after 5 PM) or weekends?
23. General Comments.

Rate of DWF Grades among Study Group Participants and Non-Participants



Rate of DWF Grades among PLUS Groups and non-PLUS Groups participants.