

PLUS

SUCCESSING
TOGETHER

PLUS Program Executive Summary

Academic Year 2022-2023

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Program Overview & History

The Program Leading to University Success (PLUS) is an academic support program that first began offering peer-led study groups to students at Eastern Washington University in the fall of 1992.

Study Groups are typically offered for 100 and 200 level courses that have been identified as being historically difficult for students based on DFW rates as well as student and faculty feedback.



In Fall 2010, contract-based, one-on-one peer tutoring was introduced. In Winter 2011, PLUS joined the Western eTutoring Consortium (WeTC), providing our students online access to tutors at college and universities across the Western United States.

In 2012, PLUS moved to the main floor of the JFK Library to serve as a partner in the Learning Commons. A dynamic and free-form students earning 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.

In September 2018, peer academic coaching was introduced as a service students could self-request. In July 2020, PLUS joined the Academic Success and Academic Planning Team, which reports to the Office of the Provost.

In Fall 2022, PLUS partnered with CurioXR's pilot program to provide free virtual reality to EWU students.

CRLA Certification & Training

PLUS is internationally certified through the College Reaching and Learning Association (CRLA) for tutor training through levels 1,2, and 3. Each training session covers a student success strategy and best practice that can be implemented and/or shared with peers in PLUS sessions, including but not limited to the following topics:

Learning Theories

SMART Goal Setting

Grit & Growth Mindset

Working with Special Populations

Implicit Bias

Active Learning Strategies



PLUS student employees are required to complete levels 1 and 2. To become a certified tutor for either level, they must complete 10 training hours and meet a minimum of 30 contact hours per quarter. Upon completion, the students receive a certificate that can be added to a professional portfolio. Students can then choose to pursue their level 3 certificate to become a Master Tutor.

New academic coaches are considered coaches-in-training during their first quarter of employment. During their first term, they complete levels 1, 2, and 3, and shadow veteran coach's sessions giving them hands-on experience before independently coaching their peers.

Student Employment Guidelines

Requirements

Student employees who apply, interview, and are hired as PALs and/or tutors through the PLUS program received at least a 3.3 in the course, maintain a 3.0 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.

Professional Staff 2022-2023

Director



Caroline Dias, M.A.

Retention Specialists



Samer Alrayes, M.A. , M.F.A.
Academic Coaching



Taylor Kensel, M.F.A.
Study Groups/Sl

Graduate Students



Jasmine Krapf
GSA



Aimee Brooks
GSA

Student employees who apply, interview, and are hired as academic coaches must have and maintain an overall 3.3 or higher GPA and at least have sophomore standing.

Supervision

Student employees are directly supervised by the retention specialists who coordinate PLUS services. GSAs will also assist as needed.

Assessment

PLUS 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 GSAs conduct observations of student employees. A performance rubric is utilized and an observation follow-up meeting is scheduled for 15 minutes in which the observer reviews the rubric with the student employee and identifies what went well in the session and what can be improved. We call it a "praise and polish" approach.

Additionally, students attending PLUS session are asked to complete an end-of-quarter survey 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 PLUS student employees respectively via email. These surveys are completely anonymous.

Yearly Program Highlights

CRLA Recertification

In AY23, PLUS completed recertification with the College, Reading and Learning Association (CRLA). PLUS has been certified through CRLA for many years and we went through the re-certification process during AY23. Re-certification is important because it holds our program to a higher standard. We are required to have all our student employees have an overall GPA of at least 3.0 and a 3.3 in any course they are assisting students with. We hold our academic coaches a bit higher, and they must hold a 3.3 GPA overall to remain working for us. By being certified, we are connected to other campus' nationwide,

connected to new educational programs being brought up, professional development for full-time staff, current educational research, and connected to a regional group of institutions. We train all our student employees as part of our certification. We also provide professional development opportunities throughout the academic year.

CurioXR Partnership

During the 2022 CRLA conference, Caroline Dias saw a virtual reality (VR) pilot program being presented. Seeing the protentional of the program, she submitted an application to bring VR to EWU. Since then, Caroline and Samer Alrayes have been working closely with CurioXR in order to help develop the program. Samer trained a handful of student employees to become familiar with the system, and when used during a tutoring session, we had positive feedback. Caroline also presented in a worldwide conference about bringing VR into education and ideas on how it can be expanded.

Tutoring

Students interested in receiving tutoring assistance complete a request form on the PLUS website and agree to the terms of the tutoring commitment. In short, they are expected to come to all scheduled sessions on time and prepared with questions and any course materials that are necessary for the tutor to best assist them.

The tutor and tutees meet two hours a week, which is a 20-30 hour commitment for the quarter. A minimum of 15 hours are required to meet this commitment. Tutors expect to have three to six students in their tutoring sessions.

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

Study Groups/SI

Study Groups and Supplemental Instruction (SI) are peer led collaborative learning sessions for a given course. They occur twice per week (50 minutes each) on a drop-in basis in both the Cheney and Spokane campuses.

Content and learning strategies are built into sessions, including a review of lecture notes, textbook readings, problem-solving exercises, and pair- or team-based activities that promote active learning and collaboration. During sessions, students have the opportunity to ask questions and receive feedback.

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. PLUS study groups and supplemental instruction sessions target courses rather than specific student populations. Students can attend any sessions they choose during the term as attendance is not mandatory.

Academic Coaching

Academic Coaching can be defined as the one-to-one process of helping a student to assess their current study habits and assisting them in building general, transferable skills for use throughout their academic career and beyond. Coaches provide students with academic support in order to help them develop their college level skills.

Coaching targets several populations of students on campus and specializes in helping students such as first-year college students, first-generation students, and students on academic warning/probation/returning from dismissal.

Coaches usually meet once per week with students individually with their coachees. Students complete the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI) to determine specific academic skills that need further development and to increase self-efficacy. These skills include but are not limited to the following:

Motivation

Emotional Wellness

Time Management

Test Strategies

Study Skills

Stress and Anxiety

Although the LASSI is a starting point for students to identify areas of focus, coaching is very student-driven, so students dictate what they want to work on, and in what order. The coach is a guide and resource for the student. This helps to ensure that self-efficacy and confidence are increased, and the student feels more confident about their academic time at EWU.

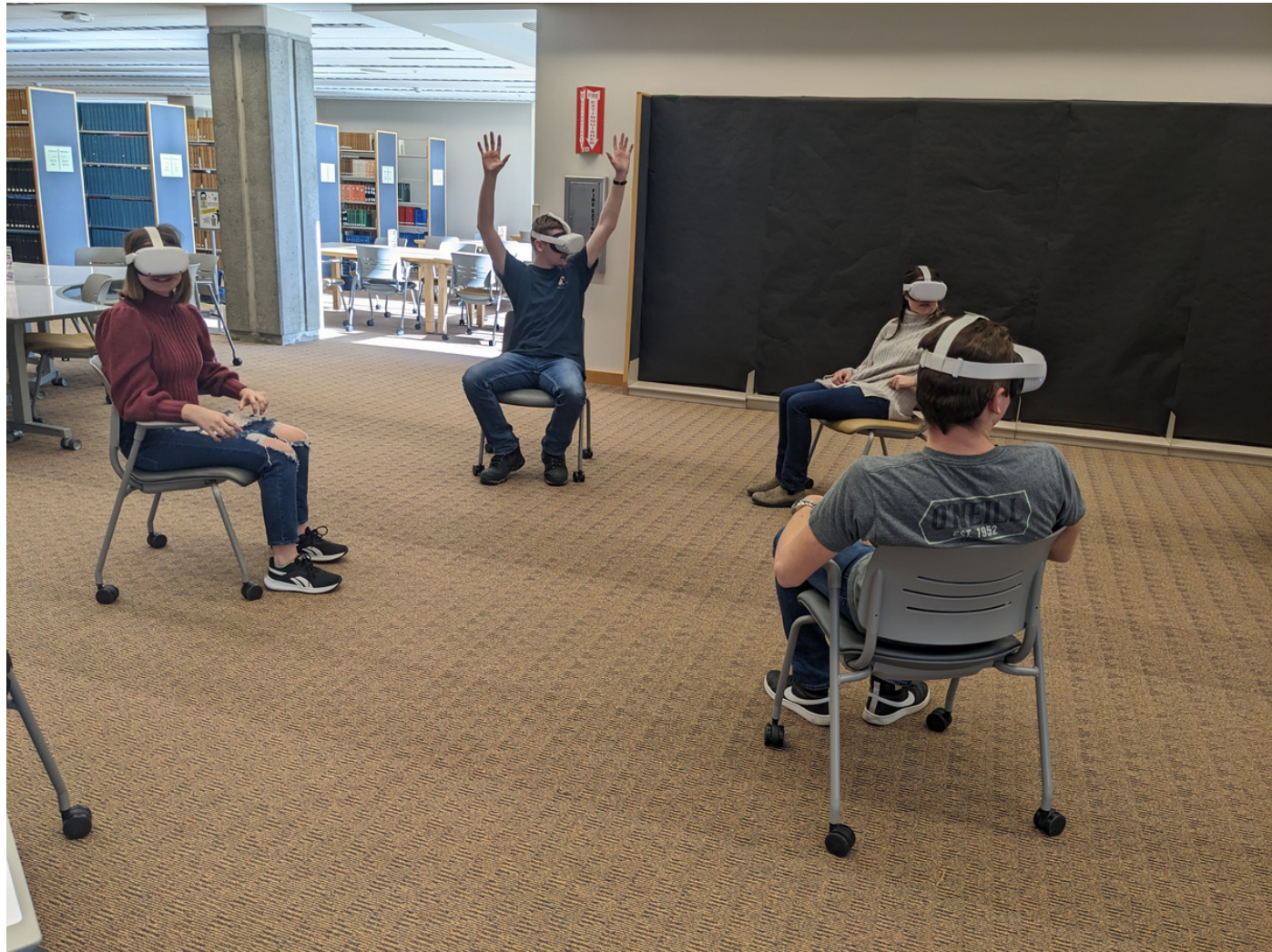


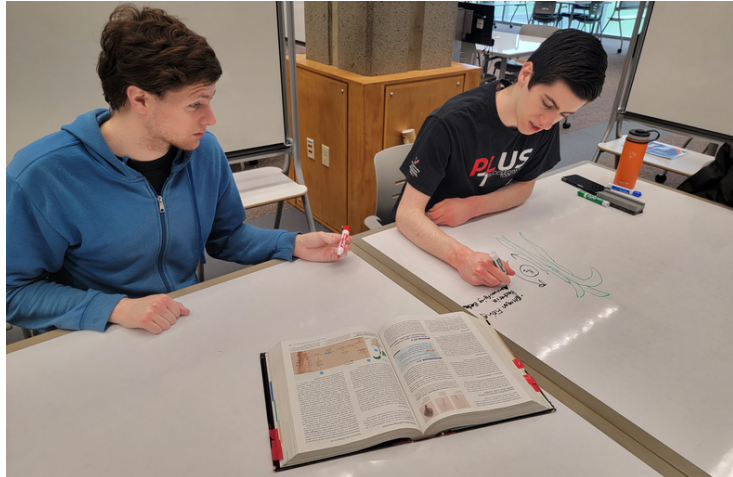
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This is seriously such an amazing program, and it is such a huge help that it is free!

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End of Quarter Survey Response, 2022-23



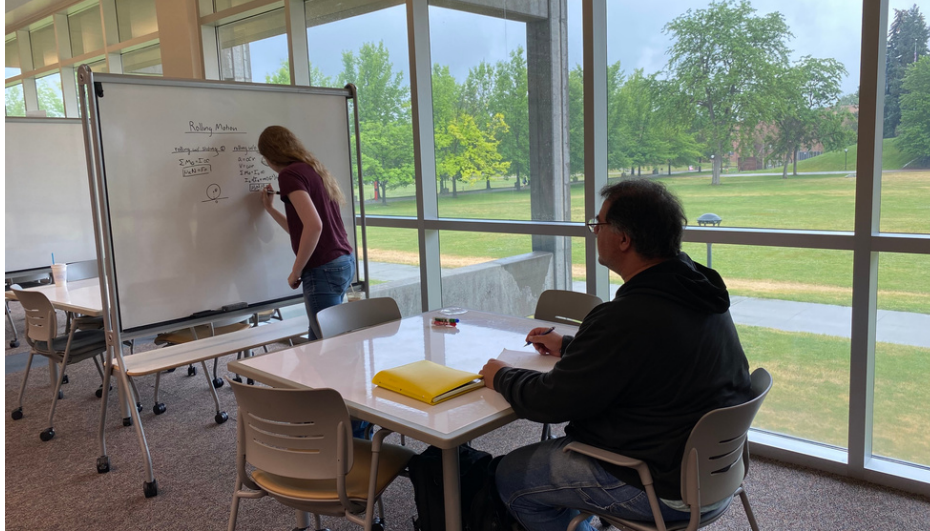


"Lizette went above and beyond as our tutor. She was kind and engaging, and genuinely cared about our success in our classes. She was always so helpful with sessions, emailing extra worksheets and tips, and responded to questions via text within an hour with kindness and help. Her help is the reason I have a good grade in Bio-Chem, without her I would not have had the confidence and understanding I had of the class. Lizette is amazing!"

End of Quarter Survey Response, 2022-23

2022-2023 PLUS Tutoring Academic Summary

Category	Fall 2022	Winter 2022	Spring 2023	Total
Total # of Students Served	341	354	317	1012
Total Tutor Commitment Matches	119	155	145	419
Total # of Commitments	234	256	265	755
Total # of Requests Received	372	342	349	1063
Total Drop-in Students Served	63	53	21	137
Total e-Tutoring Students Served	44	44	31	119
Total Unique Students Served	240	287	214	741
Total # of Tutors	30	30	30	90
Total Contact Hrs	1949	2479	2303	6751
Total Small Group Tutoring Hrs	1666	2191	2141	5998
Total Drop-In Tutoring Hrs	214	237	107	558
Total e-Tutoring Hours	89	51	55	195
Students Who Met Commitment >15 Hrs	46	67	71	184
Students Who did not Met Commitment	73	88	74	235
# of Students with a Passing Grade	100	134	129	363
% of Students with a Passing Grade	84%	86%	90%	86%
Met Commitment with a Passing Grade	42	61	64	167
% Met with a Passing Grade	91%	91%	90%	86%
Dropped Tutoring After Week 2	73	61	51	185



"Evie's way of explaining is extremely helpful and allowed me to understand concepts in a more simple manner which is nice because I tend to overcomplicate math. She is reassuring and gives lots of tips that are good to know for exams or for remembering information. I recommend Evie to any student at EWU."

End of Quarter Survey Response, 2022-23

2022-2023 PLUS Study Groups (SG) Academic Summary

Category	Fall 2022	Winter 2022	Spring 2023	Total
Total # of Students Served	270	62	109	455
Total Unique Students Served	220	60	94	371
# Faculty Assisted	18	16	15	49
# of SG Leaders	18	14	16	48
Total # of Groups Offered	217	170	171	558
# of Sessions	186	106	152	444
Total # of Student Contact Hrs	1,015	304	344	1,613
% Students Attending Groups	14.42%	4.82%	11.5%	10.30%
SG (All Attending) Course Grade Avg	3.18	2.87	3.26	3
Non-SG Course Grade Avg	2.73	2.68	2.48	2.4
Course Avg	2.8	2.68	2.57	2.7
SG (All Attending) Grade Difference	.38	.19	0.78	0.47
SG (5+ Sessions) Course Grade Avg	3.44	2.94	3.36	3.3
SG (5+ Sessions) Grade Difference	.6	.26	0.88	0.9
% SG DFW Overall Rate	5.94%	1.61%	2.59%	4.21%
% Non-SG DFW Rate	18%	18.26%	22.62%	19.26%
% SG DFW 1-4 Sessions	5.94%	1.16%	2.59%	4.21%
% SG DFW 5-9 Sessions	0%	0%	0%	0%
% SG DFW 10+ Sessions	0%	0%	0%	0%



"The additional worksheets, quizzlets, and meeting times are the primary resources holding up my biology grade this quarter. Leah is incredibly patient with me, even with my information processing disability. I don't feel bad asking her to repeat or clarify because she never makes me feel like a burden to the others during the learning process."

End of Quarter Survey Response, 2022-23

2022-2023 PLUS Supplemental Instruction (SI) Academic Summary

Category	Fall 2022	Winter 2022	Spring 2023	Total
Total # of Students Served	68	45	9	118
Total Unique Students Served	66	45	9	118
# Faculty Assisted	8	6	2	16
# of SI Leaders	8	6	2	16
Total # of SI Offered	120	98	49	267
# of SI Sessions	104	83	45	232
Total # of Student Contact Hrs	231	146	69	496
% Students Attending SI	18.68%	33.83%	18.74%	23%
SI (All Attending) Course Grade Avg	2.87	2.61	2.5	2.70
Non-SI Course Grade Avg	2.7	2.36	3.4	2.82
Course Avg	2.75	2.39	3.2	2.80
SI (All Attending) Grade Difference	.12	.2	-0.7	0.03
SI (5+ Sessions) Course Grade Avg	2.55	2.71	2.3	2.6
SI(5+ Sessions) Grade Difference	-.2	.3	-0.9	-0.1
% SI DFW Overall Rate	4.41%	11.54%	22%	8.50%
% Non-SI DFW Rate	23.99%	57.79%	5%	33%
% SI DFW 1-4 Sessions	(3) 4.41%	(6) 11.54%	11%	7.80%
% SI DFW 5-9 Sessions	(1) 1.47%	0%	11%	7.80%
% SI DFW 10+ Sessions	0%	0%	0%	0%



"My coach Kylie was truly amazing. I signed up for coaching accidentally, yet it was the best choice I've done so far. It was one of the best parts of my quarter, and learn new lessons and techniques to help with my study.

Highly recommended."

End of Quarter Survey Response, 2022-23

2022-2023 PLUS Academic Coaching Academic Summary

Category	Fall 2022	Winter 2022	Spring 2023	Total
Total # of Requests	69	66	36	171
# of Coaches	12	9	10	31
# of Long-Term Commitments	38	33	16	87
# of Short-Term Commitments	6	12	11	29
# of Long-Term Commitments Met	22	26	14	62
% of Commitments Met	58%	79%	87.50%	75%
# of Commitments Not Met	16	7	2	25
% of Commitments Not Met	42%	21%	12.50%	25%
# of Short-Term Commitments Met	1	9	8	18
% of Short-Term Commitments Met	16%	75%	72.73%	55%
# of Short-Term Commitments Not	5	3	3	11
# of Drops	25	21	9	55
Total # of Coach Contact Hrs	219	263	149	631
# of Students on Academic Warning/Probation/Dismissal Start	6	25	8	39
# of Students on Academic End	5	12	6	23
On Academic GPA Increase	4	23	7	34
Avg on Academic GPA Start	0.61	0.97	1.49	1.23
Avg on Academic GPA End	1.97	2.17	2.74	2.46

Outcomes - Tutoring

We've maintained 85% of students that used tutoring passed their class and served over a 1,012 students this past academic year. Additionally, tutoring accrued 6,751 total contact hours and average over 2,250 hours per quarter. Tutoring has proven to be consistently in high demand with PLUS having 1,063 requests.

Outcomes - Study Groups/SI

When students attended 5+ Study Group sessions, their course grade average was 3.3 while the non-Study Group course grade average ended up being 2.4. Additionally, courses with a Study Group only had a 4.21% DFW rate.

Outcomes - Academic Coaching

Academic Coaching helped serve students in Academic Warning/Probation/Dismissal and saw 87% of their GPAs increase. We have also seen a steady increase of students meeting their long-term coaching commitment (6 sessions) with PLUS having an average of a 75% completion by the end of the academic year. Academic Coaching had a total of 631 contact hours with students, and with our partnership with the Athletics program for AY 24, we expect those hours to increase.



Working with Irie was extremely helpful and I always enjoyed coming to our sessions. She's a great listener and makes sure we are making changes that will benefit me most. I highly recommend students to work with her, especially if they are introverted and need someone calm and understanding to work with.

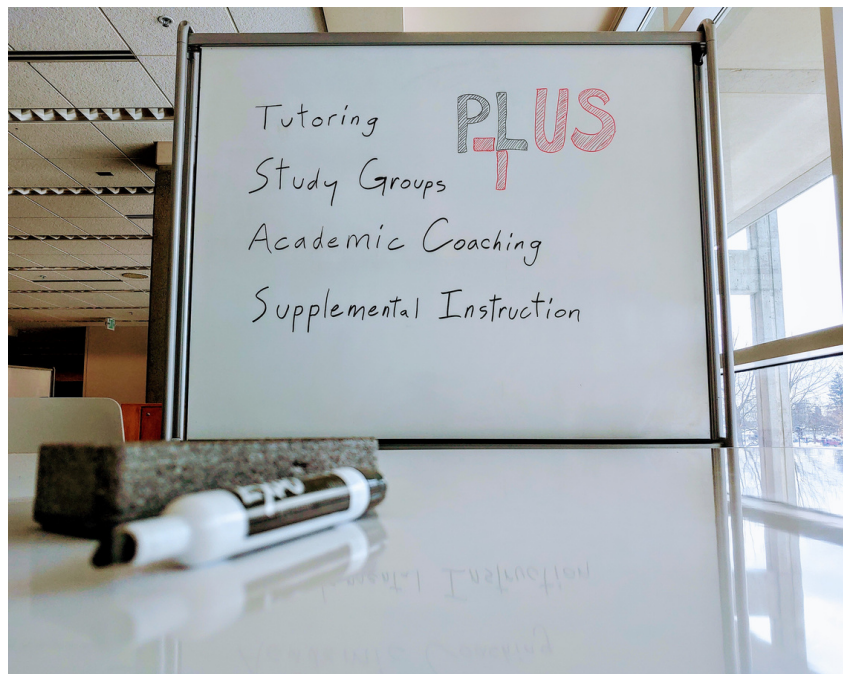
End of Quarter Survey Response, 2022-23



Outcomes - All Services

In total, PLUS served the needs of 1,560 students at Eastern Washington University.

- 964 unduplicated students
 - 596 duplicate students used more than one PLUS service
- PLUS had approximately 10,000 contact hours, and had 181 end-of-quarter survey completions (Fall, Winter, and Spring terms).
- "I feel like my sessions at PLUS were effective." 4.5/5
 - "I believe that using PLUS resources improved my overall grade and understanding of the material." 4.4/5
 - "Would you recommend the PLUS to other students?" 96% said "Yes"





Conclusion

We are working to find ways to get more students even with a lower enrollment to consistently use PLUS services. We are targeting different departments including working with a wide array of faculty to get more student involvement. During AY 23, we partnered with departments such as CAAR, CWS, SASS, CAMP, Passport, McNair, and Global Studies. Additionally, we also partnered with approximately 75 faculty members throughout both the Cheney and Spokane campuses in order to reach as many students as possible. In AY 24, we plan on continuing those relationships and working closer with the Athletics department and expanding our services in the Spokane campus. By continuing to cultivate these relationships, developing new ones, and launching CurioXR (virtual reality), PLUS services will continue to expand and help students understand course material. PLUS will continue its mission to serve students through a variety of services in new and cutting edge ways, so students can receive the support they are looking for in their courses.

"Caitlin is such a great tutor! She always answers any questions we may have, even though it may not align with the lessons we are currently learning. I can't wait to do PLUS again next year with her!"

End of Quarter Survey Response, 2022-23