The Learning Assistance Center and the Center for the First-Year Experience and Learning Communities have officially merged to become the Learning Commons. This merger represents the opportunity for even greater integration of academic and first-year support programming, as well as novel and creative approaches to improve student success over the course of students’ time at UC. This new Learning Commons will employ more than 300 students every semester to serve more than 6,000 students over the course of the academic year. Most importantly, students will be able to access support services via one site, and peer educators across all Learning Commons programs will cross-train and collaborate to reduce duplication of services while improving consistency of student experience.

This year the Learning Commons completed a full-scale implementation of new first-year programming with the College of Education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services. This FYE implementation included faculty and staff-led sections of first-year courses addressing professional writing, diversity and inclusion, financial planning, and several other competencies to help students succeed within and beyond UC. In addition, each freshman was matched with a peer academic coach to provide individualized guidance on their coursework and campus integration. Student reviews and academic outcomes were encouraging, with students seeing significant GPA changes for every completed coaching appointment. Revisions for the upcoming year are already underway, and we look forward to continuing to collaborate with campus partners to create impactful programs for students across their academic careers.

Students who regularly attend SI sessions improve grades by an average of ½ to 1 full letter grade.

Out of over 1,500 Peer Tutoring surveys, the average satisfaction ranking was 4.5 out of 5.

First-year students enrolled in a Learning Community in Fall 2017

Students who saw a coach 7+ times over a semester achieved an average GPA increase of .7 grade points.

Introducing the Learning Commons

Learning Commons in CECH: Year 1

Student Staff at the 2018 Learning Commons Launch Event
The transition is already underway; new signage and websites will be rolled out over the course of spring semester, and advising units and academic departments can also expect updated resource materials for use with students. This will not reduce any existing support services. Instead, over the upcoming months, Learning Commons staff, as well as advisory board members from every college, will work together to identify ways we can better support the work in various academic departments and units. We welcome your ideas for how we can be helpful, so please feel free to reach out with any ideas for how we can help you support academic excellence at UC!

**Rick Sheets Outstanding Tutor**

Madelyn Leembruggen, a Learning Commons Peer Tutor Mentor, was the recipient of the 2017 Rick Sheets Outstanding Tutor of the Year Award from the College Reading and Learning Association. This award is given annually to only one tutor from the 1,200+ certified tutoring programs across the world. It honors the work of undergraduate student tutors who contribute to the academic success of their peers and motivate and inspire others through their dedication and passion for their work. Madelyn accepted her award at the CRLA conference in Pittsburgh in November of 2017.

**STUDENT SPOTLIGHT**

Rachael Ratay has been a tutor at the Academic Writing Center since 2016. Having earned her degree in criminal justice in the spring of 2017, Rachael now is working on her master’s degree and plans to start her PhD later this year. At the AWC, Rachael has been an integral member of the team; she has worked with diverse student populations to help them become more proficient scholarly writers. Last fall, Rachael tutored 112 unique students over 177 sessions. Rachael represents the best of what the AWC offers to students: a friendly and pragmatic peer-to-peer learning experience.