

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

One Time Funding Request

Fiscal Year 2010-2011

Augmentation request to cover increase in administrative charge of 6% for FY 11 (2010-2011)

Amin Increase Request

\$11,598

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

Base Funding Request

Fiscal Year 2011-2012

Learning Support Services Augmentation Request

The mission of Learning Support Services (LSS) at the University of Houston is to increase graduation and retention rates by helping students learn how to learn. We offer learning support programs and self-development activities designed to increase student performance in learning and improve student retention. Individualized learning plans as well as group intervention programs are available. All services are free to currently enrolled students. LSS offers tutoring by nationally certified tutors, learning strategies counseling and learning support workshops by licensed professionals, and multi-media resources to assist students in their efforts to achieve graduation. In the past several years, the usage for services, especially those that involve our learning strategies counselors, have increased. This is in large part due to our efforts to more efficiently and effectively utilize our resources, but also due to an increased awareness of the services we bring. This year, our contacts reached over 18,000 all of which are high quality, time intensive contacts. This includes 8,397 learning strategies workshop participants, and 741 learning strategies counseling sessions provided by our licensed learning strategies counselors. This past year represented a 20% increase in those seeking individual learning strategies counseling. Additionally, there were 6,814 tutoring sessions and 793 Spanish table sessions. Our tutors, trained and certified by College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA), must meet the needs of a large, urban campus population as well as an increasing residential student population who also pay student service fees.

Our services are even more important for students in light of tuition costs and the importance of staying on course for projected graduation. Overall, our graduation and retention rates are higher than 80%. Learning Strategies Counselors, however, often see students who are at very high risk, many on academic probation. Of the fall 2009 cohort, only 24.65% had a GPA above 2.0 when they came for learning strategies counseling. The goal in this situation is to increase the percent of students who have a GPA above 2.0. By fall 2010 the percent had increased to 57.04% for students who received counseling. We are also reaching out more to students who are doing well at the university, but may be at risk of dropping below the 3.0 or 3.25 requirements for scholarships or honors designation in their colleges. We have many students in this situation who are self referred, but we have met with advisors from several of the colleges and created a referral process for those students. We also focus on helping graduate students who have different needs from undergraduates. Many students enter graduate or professional studies without having been required to write to a professional standard, summarize and present data, or apply research methods. In addition, we have been requested to present our Success Seminar to all incoming freshmen. We regularly receive requests from large classrooms to do presentations, and we have reached out to our increasing residential population. Often staff meet with resident advisors and residential students to support the learning process. Already this fall, we have completed four evening workshops for students in the new freshman housing facility. The factors discussed above not only result in higher numbers now, but also for the future as we see the demand growing.

All of these activities require time intensive efforts on the part of a small staff of only 1.5 FTE Learning Strategies Counselors. Learning Strategies Counseling involves assessment as well as intervention. Students receive individual, one on one, assistance in

assessing strengths and challenges and in identifying new strategies for success. Staff may meet with students for more than one session, each of which may likely take an hour. The learning assistance also may require follow-up and consultation with multiple resources on campus including connecting students with tutoring or media programs, speaking to faculty and staff, or referring to other campus departments such as Counseling and Psychological Services or Center for Students with Disabilities. Our Learning Strategies Counselors also facilitate our nationally recognized tutor training program. Part of what makes LSS so successful is our nationally certified individual tutoring across multiple disciplines. This would not be possible if it were not for the training and supervision provided by the Learning Strategies Counselors. Clearly these licensed professionals have a key role in student success as they are specifically trained and credentialed in the learning process, making us unique from many other departments and other institutions.

The number of tutors needed has also increased. Since the beginning of fall 2010, LSS has opened tutoring in Cougar Village to meet the needs of a growing residential campus. LSS is now open from noon until 8:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and noon until 6:00 p.m. Friday through Sunday. An individual tutor, usually able to tutor across several subjects, is also available each morning to help as is needed. As University of Houston becomes an increasingly residential campus, the need to a comprehensive "learning-living" environment has already begun to increase. Our tutoring services are an important element in that development. Tutoring is an important and effective part of helping new students to be successful in their college experience. We know that students who came for tutoring at LSS last year were positively impacted by their experience. Of those students who came for tutoring in fall 2009, only 64.52% had a GPS of 2.0 or above. By fall 2010, 86.75 had a GPA of 2.0 or above. The retention and graduate rate for this group was over 80%. This is an especially critical service then for first year students, living on campus, and making the transition from high school to college life. At Cougar Village, tutors assisted students in core courses for the freshmen curriculum. Tutors also have provided "group" tutoring sessions for each exam for college algebra, pre-calculus, calculus, and chemistry. Approximately 20 students came to the first chemistry review. As we are able to identify the material covered for each test of these demanding courses, we are able to offer more structured tutoring for each exam. All of this is in addition to the tutoring offered at LSS and the limited availability also at the Towers on Monday and Tuesday evenings.

The provision of all of these services is critical to the retention and graduation rates of University of Houston students, and the ability to meet the increasing demand is equally critical. Given the high numbers of contacts at LSS, the increasing utilization of learning strategies assistance, the increase in usage among graduate and professional students, the now required College Success series, the expansion of tutoring to Cougar Village, we are requesting a 0.5 FTE staffing support for a Learning Strategies Counselor and additional funding for more tutors. We appreciate the support of the committee and hope you will assist us in our efforts to help students as the "learn how to learn."

LSC Salary .50 FTE	\$20,000
Benefits	\$6,000
Admin Charge	\$ 1,950

Total LSC **\$27,950**

Total Tutoring Need
(187 hours X 14 weeks X 2 semesters X \$9.50 per hour divided by 2)

	\$24,871
Admin Charge	\$1,865

Total Tutoring **\$26,736**

Augmentation request to cover increase in administrative charge of 6%

Amin Increase Request **\$11,598**

TOTAL REQUEST **\$ 66,284**