



UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY FOUNDATION

United States Naval Academy Stewardship Report 2009 - 2010 Class of 1963 Center for Academic Excellence

The Class of 1963 Center for Academic Excellence supports the Naval Academy by providing the highest quality academic support and resources to the entire Brigade of Midshipmen.

The Center achieves its mission by:

- Teaching midshipmen the learning skills necessary for success in a rigorous academic and military environment;
- Assisting midshipmen to achieve academic success by providing academic support and resources to supplement and reinforce classroom instruction;
- Helping midshipmen to develop academic integrity and responsibility as they determine their own academic goals; and,
- Ensuring that a quality program is sustained by continuous measurement of program effectiveness.

The Academic Center staff for the 2009–10 academic year consisted of the center director, three program directors, two mathematics instructors, a chemistry instructor, a STEM instructor, a military officer, and a secretary. Part-time staff included seven senior academic advisors, seven paid hourly tutors, two volunteer hourly tutors, and 92 midshipmen group study leaders. Together, this strong and dedicated corps provides the center’s greatest strength – day-to-day interaction with midshipmen.

During the 2009–10 academic year, support services provided by the Academic Center included early intervention for plebes, academic advising and counseling, learning skills instruction, reading enhancement, extra help classes and individual and small group tutoring. More than 1,800 midshipmen were served and over 15,000 hours of service provided.

Expansion of instruction capability

A clear highlight of the year was the addition of a new Learning Skills Instructor in the area of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). Doug Bishop ‘65, a former instructor in the Academic Center tutoring program, joined the staff at the beginning of the spring semester. He conducted five sections of Extra Help Classes for EM300 Thermodynamics of Propulsion Systems, and two sections of Extra Help Classes for SP212 Physics II. Results were sufficiently positive to plan to continue with Extra Help classes in the fall semester of AY2010. Mr. Bishop also tutored students in: EE301 Electrical Circuit Analysis, EM319 Thermodynamics, SP211 Physics I and SP212 Physics II. Along with STEM learning skills courses, three types of Extra Help Classes are planned for the fall semester of the next academic year: three sections of EE301 Electrical Circuit Analysis, three sections of EM300 Thermodynamics of Propulsion Systems, and two sections of SP211 Physics I.

The following enthusiastic comments were made by midshipman taking STEM Learning Skills classes:

- “I think your first couple of classes and assistance really gave me the boost of confidence I needed that I can do this technical stuff. I’m striving for the A, and I’ll let you know if I get it after the final exam. Thank you again for all your help, I’ll never be able to thank you.” – 2/C midshipman
- “I have really appreciated your help this whole semester! I have a B right now which I don’t think would have been possible alone!” 2/C midshipman

As with all Learning Skills Instruction, STEM services are offered to all midshipmen and are made available based on the student’s scheduling needs.

Midshipman Group Study Program (MGSP) continues to excel

Upper-class midshipman continued to step up in service to others through the Midshipman Group Study Program in 2009-10. The Academic Center provided two courses for these volunteers: DM212 - pedagogical training in the theory, process, and techniques in leading peer-group study sessions in diverse academic disciplines, and DM301 - the opportunity to work closely with course instructors to design out-of-class learning experiences that facilitate collaborative learning. Selected returning MGSP leaders were able to become MGSP mentors to first-time leaders, assisting first-time leaders throughout the semester, providing formal evaluations, and debriefing mentees on ways in which their sessions could be improved.

MGSP leaders must meet the following requirements: grade point average greater than 3.0; has performed well in the course he/she is requesting to lead; and has not received a D or F on the previous semester final exam. In 2009-10, 93 midshipman leaders were selected for the fall semester and 98 for the spring; departments represented included Chemistry, Mathematics, Engineering, Physics, Language Studies, Political Science, Seamanship & Navigation, and STEM Camp.

During MGSP, student leaders facilitated group activities such as practicing homework problems, comparing lecture notes, summarizing assigned readings, discussing lab reports, practicing problem solving, and test preparation. More than 1,800 individual midshipmen participated in the fall semester and over 1,900 in the spring semester – approximately 44% of the Brigade – for a total of 7,703 contact hours.

Center to re-locate in 2011

With the 2007 move to Nimitz Library, it appeared that long-standing space issues would be resolved for the Academic Center. However, the demand for services has continued to increase and thus an ad hoc Facilities Planning Committee was formed to find an optimal long-term location for the center. The Committee identified the Levy Center as the most desirable location – close to Bancroft Hall and plenty of classroom space – and a move is now scheduled for the end of the 2010-11 academic year.