

## 2018–19 Learning Centers Program Review

Program Name: ESL Center  
Program Contact: Amy Sobel  
Academic Year: 2018-2019  
Updated on: 10/25/18

### 1. Description of Program

Provide a brief description of the program and how it supports the college's Mission and Values Statements, its Diversity Statement, CSM's and SMCCCD's Strategic Plans, and the college's Educational Master Plan. You may also discuss any factors that have impacted programming and usage. Include changes in student populations, statewide initiatives, transfer requirements, advisory committee recommendations, legal mandates, workforce development and employment opportunities, and community needs, as applicable.

The ESL Center provides high-quality academic support for non-native speakers of English (multilingual speakers). This support has been focused on improving students' proficiency in reading/vocabulary usage and listening/speaking skills for two groups of students: a) students whose ESL classes have TBA requirements (ESL 846, 847, 848, 856, 857, 887, and 888) and b) students who choose to take lab-only (open-entry/open-exit) courses (ESL 895, 897, and, beginning fall 2018, 849). Students work on TBA requirements in the Center and also meet with instructors and/or instructional aides to receive instructional support. In the past two years, the Center has also added Peer Tutoring in order to provide additional academic support to students in all ESL classes. Students also use the Center as a study and homework space. Our Center is open Monday through Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 pm; Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.; and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

In 2017 – 2018 (Fall, Spring, and Summer), 6,084 unique visits were made to the ESL Center, and over 6,963 hours were spent in the ESL Center by all students

The Center also serves as a vehicle to connect ESL students with relevant student support services on campus. Specifically, the Center partners with the Wellness Center Peer Educators (who participate in one-two Conversation Circles every semester with our students to improve their knowledge and understanding of mental health services available on campus) and with our Student Ambassadors program (to offer two to three campus tours every semester specifically focused on the needs of our ESL students). (More efforts are underway in this regard; please see "Planning" section of this document.)

The Center's programs are in line with some of the College's goals as stated in the College's Mission Statement:

## 1. Improve Student Success

- According to our most recent survey, 100% of students indicated that the work they do in the Center is “very” or “somewhat” helpful for skills taught in their classroom courses.

## 2. Promote Academic Excellence

- Faculty and instructional aides conduct individual meetings as required by TBA classes to review the work completed in the Center. By working individually and in small groups, instruction is individualized to address each student’s specific language-learning gaps. As this work is often part of the students’ grade, these meetings are an important contribution to students’ academic excellence.

## 3. Develop Responsive, High-Quality Programs and Services

- We respond to the changing needs of our students, by adapting our use of space, developing new curriculum and classes, and collaborating with additional departments across campus.

Most importantly, Center activities promote student success in the classroom (“academic excellence”) and beyond, as many students are also interested in improving language skills for reasons that do not include academic success, such as better (i.e., more confident and successful) integration into their communities.

The Center also squarely addresses CSM’s Diversity Statement, as it provides “equal opportunity for all without regard to gender, color, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, economic background, sexual orientation, and physical, learning, and psychological differences.” By definition, the population we serve comes from outside the United States and is very diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, age, and economic background. In addition to providing quality academic support to students, we also serve as an avenue of referral to and collaboration with needed support services across campus, including the Multicultural Center (particularly for resident, DACA/DREAMER students), Disability Resource Center (for students with physical and learning differences) and the Wellness Center (for those with psychological differences.)

NOTE: Fall 2018 is the first semester that the ESL Center has been focused exclusively on serving the needs of ESL students at CSM. Prior to the Fall 2018 semester, the Center also supported students in the Reading classes at CSM. The lack of a Reading department has changed the population we serve. As a result of this change, the Center changed its name from “Reading and ESL Center” to ESL Center in Fall 2018.

## 2. Results of Previous Program Review

- a. Describe the results of your previous Program Review’s action plan.
- b. Student success and equity: Discuss what your program has done to address equity gaps between student populations.
- c. Provide an update on any long-term plans that are still in progress (if applicable).

The previous Program Review (2016–2017) had four main goals:

1) Reconfigure the use of the space to create an ESL “hub”:

This goal has been achieved in part but is still in process. With support of our Interim Dean, Kristi Ridgway, the Center received tables and surplus dividers from the Learning Center, both of which have helped us use our space more flexibly. However, while these dividers provide a “psychological” separation between students, they do not provide any kind of separate “quiet” study space needed by students who are working on reading or listening assignments. We are currently developing ways to best address our students’ needs for both quiet space and “speaking” space. We have also recently received the large video screen we requested to assist with instructional lessons; we are waiting for the projection capability to make full use of this resource.

These equipment changes have allowed us to use the larger room (18-101) as more of a speaking space, as intended, and to encourage students to do more “quiet” work in the smaller rooms. We plan to use signs to help guide students to which areas of the Center are for “quiet” work and which are for “speaking/listening” activities at any particular time of day. (Please see Resource request for “Plastic Stand-Up Holders.”)

However, we have not yet been able to create the full “hub” as we would like, in part because the equipment has arrived in just the past few months and some has not yet arrived. Once we receive full projection capability (we are, as of today, just missing some chords and connecting wires!), we would like to provide projection capabilities for instructional purposes, such as small group grammar or pronunciation instruction. . An added benefit of projection capabilities will be that the Center could also offer occasional “social” activities such as a “Movie Night” to create also a somewhat social space for students to feel connected to.

2) Continue to incorporate Student Services into the Center:

We continue to partner with the Student Ambassadors Program and the Wellness Center Peer Educators (as noted in part 1, above). In addition, we have trained our instructional aides and student assistants so that they are more familiar with student services on campus and can provide information about these resources to our students. Finally, we have created an “Announcement” board with information about important events occurring on campus that might be of special interest to our students.

Our previous Program Review goals also listed the goal of using the Center as “office hour” space by Student Services providers from MCC and ACCEL. However, after piloting this program in Fall 2016 with Jackie Santizo (MCCDC Program Services Coordinator), we found that ESL students did not come to “office hours” for this type of support; in reality, the need for support tends to come up unexpectedly and not when a student services representative happens to be in the Center. We would like to continue to provide information about these services at our Center, but no longer feel that the “office hours” is a useful model.

3) Increase usage of the Center, not only for TBA but for other instructional support for ESL students

We have been scheduling ESL Peer Tutoring in the Center since Fall 2016, with great success. Recent data show that we have provided a total of 324 hours of Peer Tutoring for ESL students. We also offered some SI sessions at the Center from Fall 2016 to Spring 2018, but have found that, because we cannot provide space for ALL SI sessions (due to space constraints), SI leaders and coordinators felt it was better for SI sessions to be held in classrooms rather than holding some sessions in the ESL Center and others in classrooms. In addition, we began offering students the option of doing homework in the Center beginning Fall semester 2016. This has proved to be a very popular option. In Fall 2016, 31 students used the Center for 76.5 hours for this purpose. In Spring 2018, 69 students used it for 415.05 hours.

We are planning to move ESL 907/908 and 400 from the Writing Center to the ESL Center. This move will give the ESL Center to support ALL ESL students in ALL ESL classes, either through TBA support or Peer Tutoring support. See “Planning” section for more information.

4) Recruit more domestic/immigrant students

The effort to recruit domestic/immigrant students is an ESL Department goal because the number of immigrant/domestic students has greatly decreased since 2011 (see the ESL Department Program Review for more information). This decrease has impacted the Center because domestic/immigrant students are the primary demographic that takes ESL listening/speaking and reading courses which are supported by the Center. One ESL faculty member (Emily Kurland) has had release time (since Fall 2017) to work with our ACCEL Transition Coordinator (Kelsey Harrison) to help promote a smooth transition to CSM for San Mateo Adult School students. Emily, Kelsey, and the ESL Center lead (Amy Sobel) continue to work on supporting those students once they matriculate at CSM.

Part of the result of this collaboration was the offering of CSM’s first Word Jam in August 2018. Our Center’s full-time Instructional Aide was actively involved in the Jam, providing logistical support throughout, including during the field trip to Stanford. Of the 55 students who participated, 28 were from the Adult School. Anecdotal evidence indicates that these students are interested in coming to CSM in the future, but our survey did not ask students directly about future plans. The survey will be improved for next year’s Jam.

Regarding what our Center has done to address equity gaps between student populations: Because the ESL Center’s population is comprised of students whose native language is not English and who are not native-born, we are providing support to a very diverse and often underserved population. ALL ESL students have access to our Center, so the ethnic breakdown of the population we serve simply reflects the ethnic breakdown of the students in our ESL classes. In Fall 2017–Spring 2018, the Center served a much higher percentage of Asian students compared to college-wide numbers (Asian: 47.5% – 64.9% [ESL Center] compared to 20.9% – 21.6% [college-wide]). Given the high number of international students from Asia in our program, this is not a surprise. The percentage of Hispanic students that the Center served in Spring 2018 was roughly equivalent to the percentage of Hispanic students served by the college (18.6%

[ESL Center] compared to 18.3% [college-wide]).

### 3. Current Assessments

- a. Discuss what your center has done this Program Review cycle to address usage gaps between student populations, describing your successes, works in progress, and/or ongoing challenges. Refer to SARS, PRIE data, and other data sources as appropriate.

We do not see a “usage gap” between student populations at this time to focus on in our Center. All ESL students in classes which have TBA requirements are served by our Center. In addition, any student in any ESL class can access the services of our Peer Tutors. We have not gathered data about the ethnic backgrounds of students who are using our Peer Tutoring services. This disaggregated data might indicate a “usage gap” of this particular offering. We will consider the feasibility of gathering this type of data for use in future Program Reviews.

- b. Discuss what your center has done this Program Review cycle to address access gaps between modes of delivery (online, hybrid, and face-to-face), describing your successes, works in progress, and/or ongoing challenges.

Students use a variety of materials in our Center to complete their TBA and lab-only course assignments, including books, software on the Center’s computers, open-access internet material sources with specially-designed worksheets, partner work, group discussions, individual appointments, etc. Our Saturday hours accommodate the needs of night students and students taking Lab-Only courses who can only come on Saturdays. Online modes of delivery are still not possible because of the rule prohibiting the use of remote/online options for students who use the Center for TBA requirements. If that rule should change, the Center would commence exploration of online work for TBA purposes.

- c. Center Efficiency Indicators: Is the center efficient in meeting student needs? Discuss center efficiency, including staffing, hours of operation, tutorial and other services, space utilization, equipment, technology, or website, as appropriate.

Student surveys indicate that, for most students, the hours of operation are sufficient. (According to the 2017–2018 survey, 96.5% of students answered “always” or “most of the time” when asked if the Center “was available when [they] needed it”.) However, every year there is a relatively small number of students (approximately 10), who request that we stay open later or open earlier. Given the small number of students with these requests and given that the requests are very different, we believe that the current hours of operation are sufficient to meet student need given our current funding and staffing parameters.

We currently have one full-time instructional aide and one part-time instructional aide, and student assistant coverage for only 57% of our open hours. At times, the

lack of student assistant coverage combined with a lack of faculty staffing at particular hours make it difficult for the full-time instructional aide to get her legally mandated breaks without closing the Center. This has been an ongoing issue for our Center.

Like at most Centers, certain times of day are quite busy (MWF 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.) and other times less busy. Usage is especially high at the beginning of each semester as students complete their orientation to the Center, when students are nearing a deadline for an assignment, and at the end of the semester when students are trying to complete their required hours. Saturday mornings provide an important opportunity for our evening students to get the support they need; a small but steady number of students avail themselves of these hours. Once we move ESL 400 to the ESL Center (See section #4, "Planning"), the students in the ESL 400 evening section might make use of this option as well.

Although the Center is busy, we would like make the ESL Center the source for support for ALL ESL students by moving ESL 400, 907 and 908 to the Center. To do so effectively, we will need some additional staffing. (Please see "Planning" section of this document for more information.)

Peer Tutoring is offered at various hours during the week which are of course dependent on the tutors' hours of availability. For Spring 2018 and Fall 2018 semesters we have had three peer tutors available for 15 hours/week. In Spring 2018 peer tutors were available for a total of 188.75 hours throughout the semester and students utilized this service for 109.5 hours. ESL faculty are piloting a program this semester which requires students in ESL 828 to make use of support services such as SI Sessions, Peer Tutoring, and Grammar and Editing workshops; we hope that this type of encouragement will increase the number of hours that students use our Peer Tutoring services. In Spring 2019, we will have to assess the whether these types of incentives are working and decide at that point whether we should offer fewer hours of tutoring or find other ways of using our Peer Tutoring resources more fully.

The ESL Center has also been extremely fortunate to have a volunteer from the community (Frank Briski) provide additional opportunities for conversation practice each semester for two hours per week for many years. Frank has almost completed his MATESOL degree and is therefore knowledgeable about the needs of our student population. His sessions are very popular and an excellent complement to our existing programs. During the 2017-2018 school year Frank had a total of 189 students attend his sessions. This number does not correspond to unique visitors as some students attended more than one session.

- d. Reflect on recent assessment results for the center, including SLOs, best practices, and surveys. Identify trends and discuss areas in need of improvement. Specify how assessment informs center development and changes to the center.

One major area of need involves providing improved writing and grammar support for our ESL writing students. Our ESL 907/908 (lab-only writing/grammar) and ESL 400 TBA activities are currently offered in the Writing Center. While our English colleagues can help ESL students with some aspects of their writing, the ongoing grammar-related questions that ESL students grapple with are not always answered effectively by faculty who do not have that training. Therefore, in response to student need for consistent access to trained ESL instruction, the ESL Center is planning to move these students over to the ESL Center. (See “Planning” section of the document for more information.)

Another area in need of improvement is how to help students address their diverse needs most comfortably at the Center. In the 2017-2018 student survey, students noted that sometimes certain areas are noisy when they need a quiet space. We are working on best ways of guiding students to different areas of the Center so that the students who need “quiet” space can get it, while students who need space to develop their speaking skills can do so comfortably.

Related to this issue, an ongoing challenge for us is the noise caused by the air-conditioning unit, which we are not able to control. Because we are already challenged to meet the diverse needs of our students, the additional noise of the air conditioner is a definite negative factor. Many students complained about this noise in the 2017–2018 survey.

Even though we do see ways in which our Center could improve, in general, student surveys for 2017–2018 indicate that students are very happy with the services they receive at the Center. 92.5% rated the quality of the services as “excellent” or “very good.” The Center staff deserve special kudos, as 100% of students indicated that the Center’s staff was helpful. 100%! Even more importantly, 100% of students indicated that the work they do in the Center is “very” or “somewhat” helpful for skills taught in their classroom courses. Again, the 100% response is worth noting; every single student surveyed felt that the work they did in the Center helped them with the skills they were developing in their classroom courses.

Students’ comments on the survey indicate how important a Center like this is for our multilingual students, for whom college can be a frightening place:

“I am very glad because I finished with every activities and I can see now how much I learned in this semester. Thank you everyone.”

“Was my first semester at the College and I was scared about Lab work, but the people form [sic] there were really nice and helpful!!”

“I feel learning is closer to me at this center.”

#### 4. Planning

Describe and prioritize goals and plans to sustain and improve student success and equity (referring to Parts 2 and 3 above):

- a. Provide a brief description, including actions, measurable outcomes, and timelines.
- b. What will your center do to increase student success and promote student equity in the next two years? What kind of professional development and institutional support will be engaged and enacted to meet these goals?
- c. Describe other professional development activities and institutional support and collaborations that would most effectively ensure that the center achieves its goals and plans.

Goal #1: Move ESL 907/908 and ESL 400 TBA support from the Writing Center to the ESL Center (starting the process in Spring 2019 with 907/908; completion with ESL 400 by Summer/Fall 2019).

As the English department develops its response to the AB 705 mandates, it is looking for effective ways to support its students; one approach already being discussed is increasing and/or changing the way students in English classes use the Writing Center resources. Because the Writing Center staff and resources will almost certainly be heavily taxed in responding to this change, and because we feel our ESL students in ESL classes would best be served working with ESL-trained faculty, we are planning to move ESL 907/908 and ESL 400 to the ESL Center in the coming year. (That said, we also hope the Writing Center will also offer ESL faculty support for multilingual students who are no longer in ESL classes but still need the support.)

However, certain resources **must be in place** in order for this move to happen: the Center MUST receive an additional printer and additional Student Assistant Hours. The staffing is vital as we will be doubling the number of classes served (currently we serve five to seven TBA classes + three lab-only courses; once we move ESL 400 over, we will be serving an additional six to seven ESL 400 TBA sections + two additional lab-only courses). In order to help ESL students make appointments, navigate the Center, and print their essays in preparation for their appointments, our Center must have student assistants available at almost all hours of operation.

We are happy to accept any printer the College would be willing to provide, whether a printer that requires students to pay for their printing or otherwise. (Of course, we would hope students who are in need would receive some form of financial support to pay for their copies so that printing does not become an additional obstacle for financially-strapped students.)



Once this move is complete, the Center will likely be “maxed out” in terms of usage of space and staff.

Goal #2: Continue to develop ways to connect ESL students to appropriate student services across campus.

We plan to continue advertising important events on campus.

We also plan to continue working with the Wellness Center and the Student Ambassador program.

Spring 2018:

We plan to develop a connection with one additional student support service (EOPS, or the new Sparkpoint Center, for example), perhaps asking staff from these programs to participate in Conversation Circles.

Goal #3: Make the ESL Center a social/informational “hub,” not solely an instructional center.

Spring 2019:

We plan to offer one to two movie nights in the Center.

Fall 2019:

Because the Center will be as full as it can be once we move ESL 907/908 and 400 over from the Writing Center, further regular activities to support ESL students’ social and cultural needs will have to wait until further space becomes available. Ideally, the “Village” space could be used for these activities, as it is located close to the ESL Center and it already proudly celebrates multiculturalism with its amazing mural.

Goal #4: Revise ESL 895 (Lab-only class focused on developing reading skills)

ESL 895 has traditionally served students with low-to-intermediate-level English. We plan to revise this course outline so that we can effectively serve ESL students at all levels of reading ability through this course. In future years, if the demand is there, we will consider adding a second lab-only course for students who want to continue to work on their reading skills.

Resource Request addendum/explanation and justification:

1. Student Assistants:

Current budget: \$9,669.25 (26 - 27 hours/week; ~57% coverage)

Requested: \$12,480 (increase of \$2,810.75; 32 hours/week; 70% coverage)

Needed to handle the increase in predicted usage of the Center when ESL 400 moves from the Writing Center to the ESL Center. Student assistants will need to be available to help students sign up for and be ready for conferences, help facilitate smooth transitions between conferences, assist students with printing, etc. If the ESL Center's printers are "self-serve," we could possibly have *slightly* fewer Student Assistant hours, but the increase in overall student usage will still require greater Student Assistant support.

2. Printer (Laser jet, black only) (for ESL 400/907/908 students to use):

\$350 (+ tax/shipping)

Needed to handle the printing needs of ESL 400 students (additionally: associated paper and toner replacement costs).

Information given at the most recent LSC3 meeting indicated that ITS is planning on changing the printing system for all Centers on campus. Without more information, we cannot plan accordingly. Therefore, we have chosen a printer that is most like the other printer we currently have. We will assume this will be appropriate until notified otherwise.

3. Reading Plus Subscription Renewal

\$5,190 total cost

We currently host 15 *Reading Plus* seats which expire 6/30/2019.

3-year extension for 15 Lexia licenses @\$146 each (\$48.67/seat/year). The extension to the subscription would mean the next renewal would not be due until June 2022.

We use *Reading Plus* with our students in ESL 895 with much success, including a number of students coming from the SM Adult School, which also uses *Reading Plus*.

There is some possibility that we might use the *Reading Plus* diagnostic as one multiple measure for the ESL placement instrument.

4. Plastic Stand-up Sign Holders (6):

\$50 (+ tax/shipping)

To address issues related to space usage. Signs will indicate which areas are open for "Conversation Partner" work and which are "Quiet Work" areas.

5. Books for ESL 907/908 and 400 students to use:

\$220.15 (+ tax/shipping)

(2) *Fundamentals of English Grammar* 4<sup>th</sup> edition workbook \$25.60 each

(2) *Understanding and Using English Grammar* 5<sup>th</sup> edition workbook \$33.04 each

(3) *Writing Clearly* (\$34.29 each)

6. Window coverings for doors in 18-103:

Cost unknown

Lockdown drills have illustrated a major problem with our Center in case of a shooter-on-campus scenario: There is no way to hide if necessary in room 18-103 because of the large windows in the doors that have no coverings.