

**Department Assessment Plan: MAX Center**  
**(Due by January 31, 2014 to the Associate Dean of the Faculty)**

**I. Department Student Learning Statement**

The Macalester Academic Excellence (MAX) Center supports Macalester students in their efforts toward academic success and educational independence and fosters a community of intellectually engaged, life-long learners. We offer personalized tutoring across the curriculum and at all skill levels, provide support for those with disabilities, and work with professors to strengthen student learning.

In collaboration with the Department of Multicultural Life, we also coordinate the Emerging Scholars Program, an intentional learning community for multi-racial students and students of color. Ultimately, we hope to respond to the multiplicity of strengths and needs of students by creating an empowering, non-evaluative learning environment.

**II. Department Learning Goals and Outcomes**

**Clientele #1: Student Clients**

Goals

1. Academic: Clients will learn specific knowledge, skills or ideas within an academic discipline, as well as broader skills to apply to their other academic endeavors.
2. Student Efficacy: Clients will develop study skills and habits to be better students.
3. Communication: Clients will become better communicators in a variety of academic fields, media, and audiences.

Outcomes

1. Academic Goals
  - be able to demonstrate acquisition of discipline specific skills through feedback from contact reports and/or demonstrating work on equivalent situations in front of the tutor (SLIP)
  - be able to apply knowledge gained during tutoring sessions to subsequent discipline specific coursework (S&FG and possibly later SLIP)
2. Student Efficacy Goals
  - be able to describe lifelong learning skills gained from their visits to the MAX Center (S&FG)
  - demonstrate awareness of their learning process by being prepared at the beginning of meeting with tutors (SLIP) (Examples: Come with questions in mind, bring the assignment and the book, try the assignment before coming to the tutor, arrive on time for an appointment)
3. Communication Goals
  - have learned or gained knowledge critical in expressing and communicating, improving their ability to discuss or argue their point in writing (SLIP)
  - interpret and execute complicated or contextual instructions (SLIP and S&FG)
  - communicate well with tutors or MAX Center staff (Examples: making appointments, planning meetings, expressing issues of concern in the meeting) (SLIP and S&FG)

## **Clientele #2 MAX Center Tutors and Mentors**

### **Goals**

1. Academic: Tutors and Mentors will strengthen their critical-thinking skills by discussing with clients the elements of strong scholarship and thinking, in the process becoming better students and critical thinkers themselves.
2. Student Efficacy: Tutors and Mentors will generate new problem-solving approaches based on new insights and recognize their own capacity to create new understandings from learning activities and dialogue with others
3. Communication: Tutors and Mentors will learn to structure their communication to be accessible to the clients as well as conducive to the client's learning, including cases with people who have disabilities, ESL, or culture differences.
4. Professionalism: Tutors and Mentors will realize the value of working alongside student peers and staff supervisors, cultivating a sense of professionalism in their communication and comportment.

### **Outcomes**

#### **1. Academic Goals**

- add to their list of classes which they officially tutor for MAX by taking additional applicable classes (mostly Math and Science tutors) (PE)
- evaluate their own mental processes when completing assignments, identifying successful practices and areas where improvement is needed and explaining how these observations could be shared with clients (TT)

#### **2. Effective Tutoring Goals**

- participate in group projects as part of a team (TT and PE)
- communicate clearly and effectively with clients, tutors, and staff (SLIP, TT and PE)
- exhibit commitment, dedication, adaptability and flexibility (TT and PE)

#### **3. Communication Goals**

- communicate well with clients of all backgrounds and abilities (SLIP, PE and OBS)
- explain their successful communication strategies to fellow tutors (TT)

#### **4. Professionalism Goals**

- respect the personal and professional boundaries of peers and clients (TT and PE)
- respect the directives and expectations of their supervisors (TT and PE)

## **III. Department Assessment Strategies**

### **Student Clients:**

The two main assessment methods for the student clients are the contact slips and student surveys. Analysis of the collected contact slips (SLIP) gives us information from the tutors and the clients about most of the academic and communication goals. A sample of student clients are then surveyed both by email and face-to-face to analyze the learning outcomes more closely (S&FG). The slips are constantly being revised to make them both easier to use and more useful in gathering information.

### **Tutors and Mentors:**

Academic goals are evaluated each semester in a meeting with each tutor (PE). This information is augmented by information from slips and information from the classes taken by each tutor and tutor observations (OBS). Professionalism is evaluated on a weekly basis at our tutor meetings (TT).

#### **IV. Four-Year Timeline to Implement Assessment Strategies**

Continuous: The slips we use with each contact are evaluated and perhaps altered each year. This source of assessment data affects what other information we try to collect. This will also happen with our ‘canned’ questions for the tutors at their semesterly evaluations.

2014: Formalize the process for sampling clients and using focus groups to ask questions about learning and changes in learning among our clients. Implement a focus group every semester.

2015: Focus on study skills; check changes in study skills among clients who use those tutors and those who use writing or science tutors.

2016: Assess the differences in learning between certified and non-certified tutors, adding in the level-2 certification once we get it.

2017: No idea yet.