

## STUDENT RETENTION INITIATIVES REPORT FOR 08/09 AY

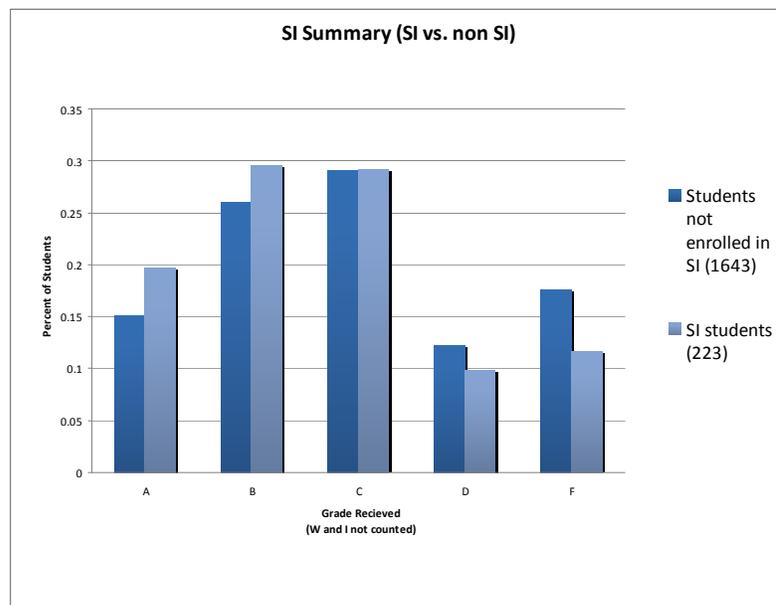
### Latino Peer Mentoring, 08/09

Fall 2008 marked the third class of the Latino Peer Mentoring Program—whose successes include a participation rate of 50 mentees with 98% pre-registering for the fall 2009 semester—much higher than the average returning freshmen rate. Another area of success this year was the academic standing of program mentees. Additional academic components were added to the program this past year such as increased mentor training in basic time management and study skills, academic skill presentations by Learning Center staff to mentees, and peer-led study groups. With the added efforts, 86% of freshmen mentees were in good academic standing at the end of the academic year as compared to 75% of fall freshmen. The program also included events and activities such as the beach bonfire night during HumWeek, Arcata tours and scavenger hunts, staff and faculty presentations, Spanish movie nights, and social events such as piñata making, Arts Alive!, and roller-skating.

### Supplemental Instruction 08/09

This year the Learning Center assumed the coordination of peer-led Supplemental Instruction (SI) for difficult science classes. (Previously, SI was primarily offered through grant award to biology professor Dr. Varkey. This year, the program was funded both by a grant obtained by Dr. Varkey and the university's Student Retention funds.) Three-hundred twenty-three (323) students participated this past year, compared to 227 participants the previous year. Advancements in the program included ongoing training of the SI peer leaders and adding SI sections to accommodate more students. The initial results of the program are promising: SI participants, as a whole, received more passing grades and fewer Ds and Fs in their corresponding science classes as compared to non-participating peers. While the initial findings do not indicate a statistically significant difference, the outcome is hopeful.

### Supplemental Instruction Comparisons



### Internship Peer Advising Program 08/09

Each Internship Peer Advisor (IPA) has already had experience in one or more internships or other career-related experiences. IPAs offer one-on-one appointments with students who are interested in seeking an internship. They do an assessment of each student's "internship search readiness", an initial resume critique, and an introduction to the search process and resources.

IPAs also offer "How to Find an Internship" workshops and short presentations in academic classes requested by faculty.

Five trained student Internship Peer Advisors made a total of 1330 contacts this year including one-on-one peer advising appointments, academic class presentations and campus-wide events. The IPA Program was awarded \$4500 for student salaries from the President's Retention Fund, with a continued commitment for next year. Below is the detail of the work of the Peer Advisors for the 08/09 Academic Year:

- Appointments with peers totaled 134, with 94 of these being first-timers, and encompassing over 30 majors.
- Twenty-seven presentations were made to academic classes to over 600 students.
- The IPAs conducted two outreach presentations to over 40 faculty and staff.
- Thirty internship workshops were conducted in the Career Center to 129 students
- The IPAs hosted 11 events to over 360 student/visitor participants.
- The newly created "***Feed Your Passion***" clinics topped off at six, Spring Preview presentations totaled two, and Summer Clinics completed the list at two.
- Thirteen new web and print resources were also developed to facilitate student interest.
- There were over 2800 visitors to the IPA website by mid-May.
- With renewed interest focused on marketing and advertising, the IPAs created and designed flyers, emails, table tents, ads, buttons, an IPA banner, and IPA Student Highlights.
- As a result of budget proposal presented to the Dean of Students and the Vice President of Student Affairs, the IPA Program was awarded \$4,500 for IPA salary stipends.

### HSU Learning Commons 08/09

These funds were used for completion of the remodel of the portion of the Learning Commons located in the lower level of the Library, housing the Learning Center, Student Disability Resource Center, Testing Center, Veterans Services, Writing Center, and offices for some library staff.

Culminating a multi-year planning process, the Humboldt State University Library building is now home to several services that support student learning. Four of those services are recent additions to the Library building, having relocated from various other buildings across campus this past summer, in an effort to improve their accessibility and convenience to the student community.

The Learning Commons initiative is a collaborative effort involving all of the divisions from across the University, including the President's Office, Academic Affairs, Administrative Services, Student Services, University Advancement, and the University Center, with some additional support from private donors. The Library has played a lead role in conceptualizing, planning, and implementing the Learning Commons, connoting its broadening role in providing student support, and is working closely with those units which recently moved into the Library building.

### *Learning Commons Goals*

The overarching goal of the Learning Commons is to provide a flexible, comfortable, welcoming, and convenient environment which supports the educational mission of the University. Within the Learning Commons, students are now able to:

- Access electronic and print information resources;
- Engage in quiet individual study;
- Convene in study groups;
- Conduct independent research;
- Get expert assistance with assignments, projects, and presentations;
- Receive additional support for academic subjects, test preparation, etc.;
- Receive technical support for personal computing, web development, multimedia, and networking applications;
- Get customized assistance in the use of academic instructional tools; and
- Gain sustenance (food and drink) to fuel their studies.

### *Learning Commons Partners*

As noted, the Commons now provides a convenient location under one roof for numerous support services that help facilitate student learning and academic achievement. The services now available in the Library building include:

**HSU Library** – providing access to electronic and print information resources, personalized expert research assistance, and ample space for individual and group study.

**Computer Help Desk** – offering drop-in and telephone assistance in accessing and utilizing campus computing networks and resources.

**Learning Center** - providing personalized assistance with difficult courses, study skills, standardized test preparation, reading, math, and writing skills; coordinates both one-on-one and small group tutoring.

**Library Café** – providing a convenient location to grab a snack and beverage, meet and socialize with friends, recharge handheld devices, and/or study.

**Student Disability Resource Center** – offering disabled students with customized services to support their access to and use of campus resources and facilities.

**Testing Center** – providing an accommodated environment for taking standardized tests that are required for university admission or placement in specific classes.

**Veterans Enrollment & Transition Services** – offering academic advising, counseling, and other services to United States military veterans, active duty personnel, and their dependents.

**Writing Center** – offering expert support for writing and research across the curriculum.