

Investing in Student Success

Since the mid-1960s, UW-Whitewater has offered free peer-to-peer tutoring services for students. At that time, the focus was to help struggling students achieve passing grades. Today, tutoring is seen by students as akin to preventative medicine – when students start getting help early and often, not only will they survive academically, they will thrive.



The Mary Poppe Chrisman Student Success Center opened in the fall of 2017 to house Student Support Services. In the fall semester over 45,000 hours of tutoring were completed – one of the highest service levels on record.

In Fall 2017 the university opened the doors to a state-of-the-art building dedicated to student success – the Mary Poppe Chrisman Success Center. In the first three months of the center’s opening, an all-time record of 45,476 tutoring hours were logged to benefit nearly 3,000 students. Tutoring provides a game plan for students who want to deepen their understanding of material, improve their written and communication skills and increase their self-confidence. Tutoring benefits both the student tutor who reinforces the material by teaching it and the student seeking assistance. In fact, student tutors have a 98% graduation rate and students who receive tutoring report a 98% satisfaction rate from these services. But our service goals are not yet realized.

Imagine the success of our student body if the center were able to continue to expand services for high-demand subjects and invest in technologies to support different learning styles. Imagine the message we will send to prospective students and parents about our commitment to ensuring their students do well and embrace academic success. And imagine how well-equipped students who use these services and those who serve as tutors will be to achieve success in the workplace. UW-Whitewater is poised to capitalize on new opportunities to set our academic support services apart from its peer institutions and to address our campus strategic goal to increase retention and graduation rates.

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The move to the Mary Poppe Chrisman Success Center brought greater visibility for these programs, and students have been drawn in by the welcoming atmosphere that creates a game plan for academic improvement and a sense of community. As demand for these services rise, there will be increased costs for ongoing needs and new initiatives. State funds and tuition fees will not be sufficient to meet the demand for hiring more qualified peer tutors and supplemental instructors, professional development support of Success Center employees, technology advancement, and other activities to expand the learning experiences and support initiatives for student success and center-based programs.

The Student Success Endowment will provide philanthropic support to ensure all students have access to high-quality academic services and that the services will be able to evolve to meet the future needs of students. For 150 years, UW-Whitewater has been a campus of access and opportunity. With your help, we will help even more students achieve academic and personal success for generations to come.



Supplemental Instructors use large monitors to share notes and illustrations with students. Student Support Services is one of the largest employers of student workers on campus.



UW-Whitewater freshman Zoe Hawthorne, left, is tutored in math by junior Taylor Beaver. One-on-one and small group tutoring is offered in many subjects on a scheduled or drop-in basis.