

# PLUS

SUCCEEDING  
TOGETHER

## PLUS PROGRAM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ACADEMIC YEAR 2021-2022

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### PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND HISTORY

The Program Leading to University Success (PLUS) is an academic support program that first began offering peer-led study groups to students at Eastern Washington University in the fall of 1992.

Study groups are typically offered for 100 and 200 level courses that have been identified as being historically difficult for students based on the rate of D, W, and F course grades received, as well as student and faculty feedback.

In the fall of 2010, contract-based, one-on-one peer tutoring was introduced, and in the winter of 2011, the PLUS program joined the Western eTutoring Consortium (WeTC), providing our students online access to tutors at colleges and universities across the Western United States.

In 2012 PLUS moved to the main floor of JFK Library to serve as a partner in the Learning Commons, a dynamic and free-form student learning space containing moveable whiteboard tables, chairs and rolling whiteboards. Extended evening hours were added in 2015. In October of 2016, library management was restructured to include the Learning Commons and specifically the PLUS program.

In September 2018, peer academic coaching was introduced as a service students could self-request. In July 2020, PLUS joined the Academic Success and Academic Planning Team, which reports to the Office of the Provost.



## PROFESSIONAL STAFF 2021-2022

### DIRECTOR

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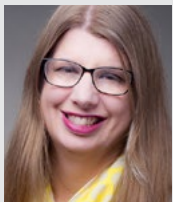
**Michelle Galey, M.S.**

### RETENTION SPECIALISTS

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**Rachel Carroll, M.A.**  
Academic Coaching



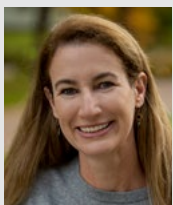
**Caroline Dias, M.A.**  
Tutoring



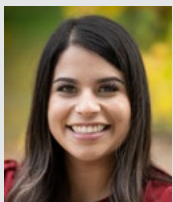
**Alyson Rode, M.A.**  
Study Groups/SI

### GRADUATE STUDENTS

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**Jennifer Krasner**  
Graduate Student Associate (GSA)



**Cecilia Oronia**  
Graduate Student Associate (GSA)

## CRLA CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING

PLUS is internationally certified through the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) for tutor training through levels I, II, and III. Each training session covers a student success strategy and best practice that can be implemented and/or shared with peers in PLUS sessions, including but not limited to the following topics:

Time Management	Critical Thinking
Communication Skills	Goal Setting
Campus Resources	Test Anxiety
Active Learning	Learning Styles
Problem-Solving	Study Skills



PLUS student employees are required to complete Levels I and II. To become a certified tutor for either level, they must complete 10-11 training hours and meet a minimum of 30 student contact hours per quarter. Upon completion of the requirements, the students receive a certificate that can be added to a professional portfolio.

Some student employees choose to pursue their Level III certificate to become a Master Tutor. New academic coaches are considered coaches-in-training for their first quarter of employment. During that term, they complete CRLA levels I, II, and III, as well as shadow another coach's sessions to get hands-on experience before independently coaching their peers.

### STUDENT EMPLOYMENT GUIDELINES

#### Requirements

Student employees who apply, interview, and are hired as facilitators and/or tutors through the PLUS program received at least a 3.3 in the course, maintain a 3.0 or higher overall GPA, have sophomore standing or higher, and have received a faculty recommendation. They demonstrate leadership

qualities, excellent communication skills, and a willingness to help others.

Student employees who apply, interview, and are hired as academic coaches must have and maintain an overall 3.3 or higher overall GPA and have at least sophomore standing.

### **Supervision**

Student employees are directly supervised by one to three retention specialists who coordinate PLUS services. Graduate students may assist as needed.

### **Assessment**

PLUS student employees must attend certified CRLA training sessions in their first quarter of employment to gain proficiency in their peer support role by learning best practices.

To assess whether these best practices are being implemented in learning sessions, retention specialists and graduate students conduct quarterly observations of student employees when they are in a session. A performance rubric is utilized and an observation follow-up meeting is scheduled for 15 minutes in which the direct supervisor reviews the rubric with the student employee and identifies what went well in the session and what can improve.

Additionally, students attending PLUS sessions are asked to complete an end-of-quarter survey (see Appendix) providing both quantitative and qualitative data on the efficacy and quality of service provided by PLUS. The complete results of each survey are provided to PLUS student employees respectively via email. Any names provided within the comments are removed prior to dissemination.

## **YEARLY PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

### **PLUS STUDENT EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH**

The PLUS staff helped determine which student employee (facilitator, tutor, academic coach, office aide) would be recognized as a model employee each month. Recipients received a copy of their PLUS Employee of the Month certificate, had their photo and announcement posted in the Learning Commons, and also had a social media posting on the PLUS Facebook and Instagram sites.

### **PLUS OUTREACH**

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, opportunities to present to students were limited. However, through Zoom, PLUS staff presented on academic success strategies to freshmen student athletes attending Life Skills courses, and in other courses at the faculty member's request. Additionally, they presented on test-taking strategies in all sections of First Year Experience (FYE)

first-year seminars in Fall 2021. Professional staff and graduate students also presented at many events via Zoom, including New Student Orientation.

## **STUDY GROUPS/SI**

Study groups and Supplemental Instruction (SI) are peer-led collaborative learning sessions for a given course. They occur twice per week (50 minutes each) on a drop-in basis in the Learning Commons of JFK Library, the Spokane Catalyst building, or in classrooms across campuses.

Content and learning strategies are built into sessions, including a review of lecture notes, textbook readings, problem-solving exercises, and pair- or team-based activities that promote active learning and collaboration. During sessions, students have the opportunity to ask questions and receive feedback.

Student attendees gain confidence in mastering content, develop critical thinking skills, learn how to ask questions of their peers and instructors, and apply new learning strategies. PLUS study groups and supplemental instruction sessions target courses rather than specific student populations. Students can attend any sessions they choose during the term as attendance is not mandatory.

## **TUTORING**

Students interested in receiving tutoring assistance complete a request form on the PLUS website and agree to the terms of the tutoring agreement. In short, they must come to all scheduled sessions on time and prepared with questions and any course materials (textbook, class notes, etc.) that are necessary for the tutor to best assist them.

The tutor and tutees meet two hours a week, which is equal to a 20- to 30-hour commitment for the quarter. A minimum of 15 tutoring hours are required to meet this commitment. Students can expect to have two to three students in their tutoring sessions.

All tutoring sessions occur in the Learning Commons and Catalyst building in Spokane. Students are assigned to an available tutor and most communicate via text, email, or phone prior to sessions. Many request the same tutor to assist them in a course sequence the following quarter.

## ACADEMIC COACHING

Academic Coaching can be defined as the one-to-one process of helping a student to assess their current study habits and assisting them in building general, transferable skills for use throughout their academic career and beyond. Coaches provide students with academic support in areas ranging from time management and goal setting to attitude and motivation, as well as a variety of study skills.

PLUS targets several populations of students on campus and specializes in transitioning to college for first-year students, first-generation students, graduate students, students on academic warning or probation, and students who are looking to strengthen the skills they already possess.

Coaches generally meet once per week with students individually. Students are paired with their coach through a self-request form on the PLUS website. Students complete the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI) to determine specific academic skills that need further development and to increase self-efficacy. These skills include the following:

- Anxiety
- Attitude
- Concentration
- Self-Testing
- Motivation
- Selecting Main Ideas
- Information Processing
- Test Strategies
- Time Management
- Using Academic Resources

Although the LASSI is a starting point for students to identify areas of focus, coaching is very student-driven, so students dictate what they want to work on, and in what order, guided by the coach. This helps to ensure that self-efficacy and confidence are increased, and the student feels more confident about their academic time at EWU and beyond.

## OUTCOMES FOR PLUS SERVICES 2021-22

### Outcomes—Study Groups and SI

- Served a total of 501 students through study groups and Supplemental Instruction (SI)
- 349 unique (unduplicated) students attending study groups and 112 unique students attending SI sessions
- Accrued **2,230** student contact hours
- Employed 29 facilitators and 11 SI leaders, provided 21 study groups, 9 SI groups, and partnered with 42 faculty members
- For study groups: Students who attended 5+ sessions per quarter achieved a course grade difference of **.33** compared to their peers in class who did not attend\*
- For SI: Students who attended 5+ sessions per quarter achieved a course grade difference of **.8** compared to their peers in class who did not attend\*

*\*While a direct causal link cannot be drawn between session attendance and course grades, the results are still suggestive. It is also recognized that motivation may serve as a mediating factor.*

- For study groups: The overall PLUS DFW rate was 15% and the non-PLUS DFW rate\* was 24%
- For SI: The overall PLUS DFW rate was <sup>†</sup>1% and the non-PLUS DFW rate\* was 32%

*\*Number of students in course who obtained D, F, and W grades relative to total number*

*†Attended 5+ sessions*

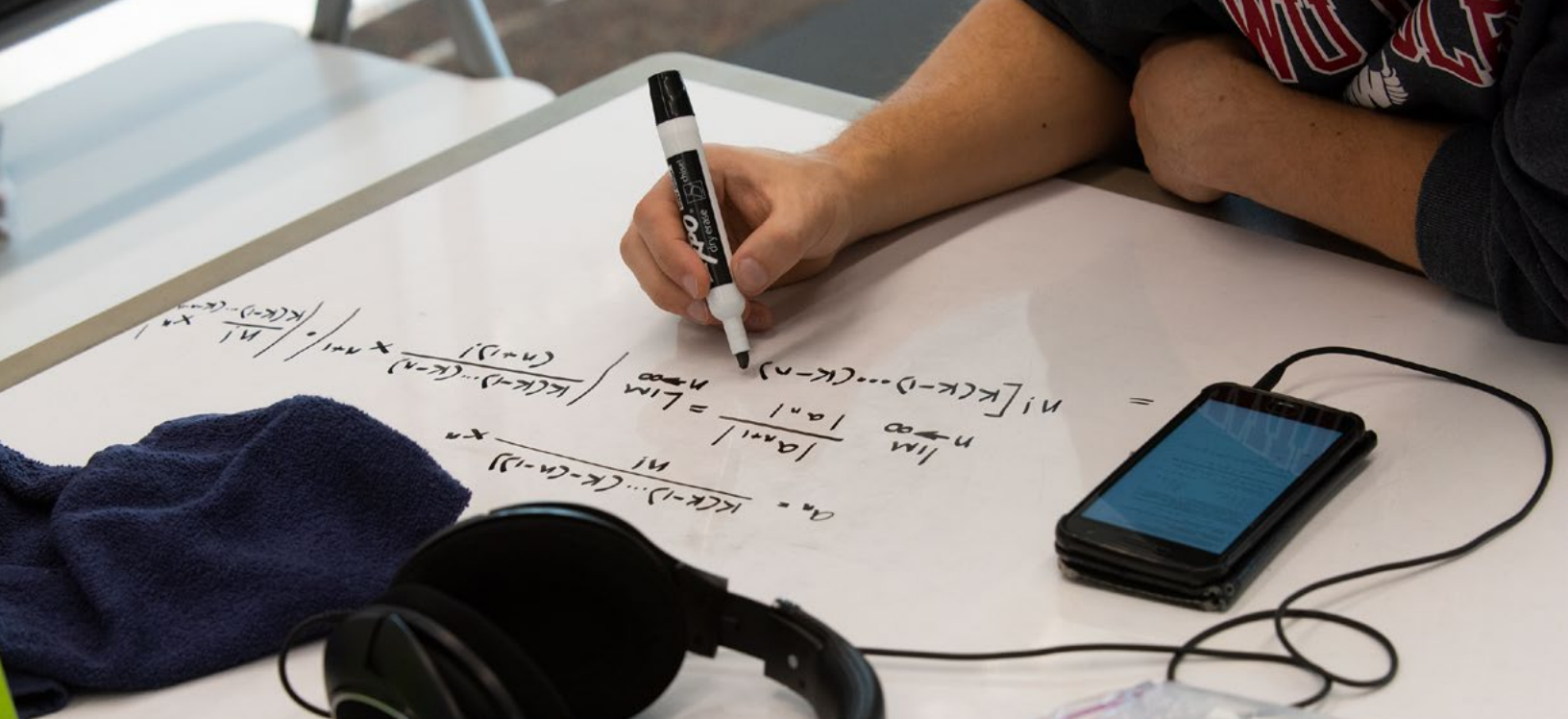




“This program is AMAZING. I cannot thank all of the staff and tutors enough; it is super helpful for students who want to improve their learning.”

— End of Quarter Survey Response, 2021-22





## 2021-2022 PLUS STUDY GROUPS ACADEMIC YEAR SUMMARY

Category	Fall 2021	Winter 2022♦	Spring 2022♦	Total
# Total Individual Students Served ■	262	61	66	<b>389</b>
# Individual Students Served*	245	49	66	<b>360</b>
# Total Unique Students Served ♦	229	61	59	<b>349</b>
# Faculty Assisted	16	8	5	<b>29</b>
# Group Facilitators	17	7	5	<b>29</b>
# Total Study Groups Offered ■	16	7	4	<b>27</b>
# Study Groups Offered	12	5	4	<b>21</b>
# Study Group Sessions	290	102	93	<b>485</b>
Student Contact Hours***	1,172	333	391	<b>1,896</b>
% Students Attending Study Groups*	29%	15%	40%	<b>24%</b>
PLUS (All Attending) Course Grade Average	2.7	2.74	3.0	<b>2.92</b>
Non-PLUS Course Grade Average	2.7	2.6	3.0	<b>2.77</b>
Course Average	2.8	2.7	3.8	<b>3.0</b>
PLUS (All Attending) Grade Difference	0	.14	0	<b>.15</b>
PLUS (5+ Sessions) Course Grade Average	3.0	2.8	3.9	<b>3.1</b>
PLUS (5+ Sessions) Grade Difference	0.2	.1	.9	<b>0.33</b>
% PLUS DWF Rate	17%	12%	0%	<b>15%</b>
% Non-PLUS DWF Rate	29%	18%	0%	<b>24%</b>

■ Includes low attendance study groups and incompletes (ended early in quarter)

\* Of the students enrolled in courses included in the analysis

♦ Unduplicated

## 2021-2022 PLUS SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION (SI) ACADEMIC YEAR SUMMARY

Category	Fall 2021	Winter 2022◊	Spring 2022◊	Total
# Total Individual Students Served ■	46	66		<b>112</b>
# Individual Students Served*	42	58		<b>100</b>
# Total Unique Students Served ◆	46	66		<b>112</b>
# Faculty Assisted	3	10		<b>13</b>
# SI Leaders	3	7		<b>10</b>
# Total SI Groups Offered ■	3	8		<b>11</b>
# SI Groups Offered	3	6		<b>9</b>
# Study Group Sessions	58	141		<b>199</b>
Student Contact Hours	159	175		<b>334</b>
% Students Attending SI*	29%	12%		<b>16%</b>
SI (All Attending) Course Grade Average	2.3	2.9		<b>2.7</b>
Non-SI Course Grade Average	2.1	2.4		<b>2.3</b>
Course Average	2.1	2.5		<b>2.4</b>
SI (All Attending) Grade Difference	0.2	0.4		<b>0.4</b>
SI (5+ Sessions) Course Grade Average	2.7	3.3		<b>3.1</b>
SI (5+ Sessions) Grade Difference	0.6	0.9		<b>0.8</b>
% SI DWF Overall Rate	33%	10%		<b>20%</b>
% Non-SI DWF Rate	33%	34%		<b>32%</b>
SI DWF 1-4 Sessions	31%	9%		<b>19%</b>
SI DWF 5-9 Sessions	2%	0%		<b>1%</b>
SI DWF 10+ Sessions	0%	0%**		<b>0%</b>

■ Includes low attendance SI sessions (<10 contact hours)

\* Total Course Averages, Total Students Attending (%), and Total DWF Rate (%) Calculated Based on All Raw Data  
Percent Students Attending From Class = Number sessions attended/class enrollment

◆ Unduplicated

◊ SI was not offered in Spring 2022

\*\* Only one SI had 10+ attendance

## OUTCOMES – TUTORING

- Served 910 individual students across commitment-based, drop-in, and WeTC tutoring
- 658 unique (unduplicated) students attending
- Employed 78 total tutors
- Accrued **7,302** student contact hours across all tutoring services
- **84%** of students who met commitment received a passing grade of 2.0 or higher

## OUTCOMES – ACADEMIC COACHING

- Served 194 individual students across commitment-based and short-term academic coaching, with 214 students requesting coaching services for the academic year
- **81%** of students who met commitment maintained/earned a 2.0 or higher cumulative GPA
- **82%** of students who received academic coaching during the 2021-22 academic year and completed both the pre- and post-LASSI showed improvement in at least 8 out of 10 areas assessed

“ I love the academic coaching. It was just what I needed when I returned to university as a graduate student. ”

– End of Quarter Survey Response, 2021-22

## 2021-2022 TUTORING ACADEMIC YEAR SUMMARY

Category	Fall 2021	Winter 2022	Spring 2022	Total
◆ Total Individual Students Served	326	292	292	<b>910</b>
Total Tutor Matches	235	246	209	<b>690</b>
Total Number of Commitments*	165	172	147	<b>484</b>
Total Number of Requests Received	349	326	301	<b>976</b>
Total Drop-In Students Served	19	0	33	<b>52</b>
Total WeTC Tutoring Students Served	63	46	45	<b>154</b>
◆ Total Unique Students Served	251	198	209	<b>658</b>
Total Number of Tutors	27	26	25	<b>78</b>
◆ Total Contact Hours	2,398	2,375	2,529	<b>7,302</b>
Total Small Group Tutoring Hours	2,293	2,247	2,324	<b>6,864</b>
Total Drop-In Tutoring Hours	28	0	131	<b>159</b>
Total eTutoring (WeTC) Tutoring Hours	77	128	74	<b>279</b>
Number of Students Received Passing Grade	140	140	125	<b>405</b>
Met Commitment with Passing Grade**	54	40	83	<b>177</b>
% Met Contract with Passing Grade	85%	81%	85%	<b>84%</b>

◆ Includes small-group commitment, drop-in, and online tutoring through WeTC

\* Includes duplicates & drops

\*\* Met commitment is equal or greater than 15 hours





## OUTCOMES-ALL SERVICES

In total, PLUS served the needs of **1,420** students at Eastern Washington University

- 891 unique unduplicated students
- 529 duplicate students used more than one PLUS service

In total, PLUS accrued **10,118** contact hours

**83** students completed our end-of-quarter surveys (Fall Winter and Spring terms). Our response rate was **7%**.

- The average response to the question, "I leave PLUS learning sessions feeling better about the material and my own abilities" was a **4.1/5**
- The average response to the question, "PLUS learning sessions are helping me to improve my grade" was a **3.9/5**
- The average response to the question, "I am satisfied with PLUS program services and my experience with them" was a **4/5**

## 2021-22 ACADEMIC COACHING ACADEMIC YEAR SUMMARY

Category	Fall 2021	Winter 2022	Spring 2022	Total
Total Number of Requests	55	61	98	<b>214</b>
# of Coaches	15	9	16	<b>40</b>
# of Commitments	41	51	52	<b>144</b>
# of Commitments Met*	36	36	33	<b>105</b>
Met Commitment with 2.0 or higher cum GPA	34	22	29	<b>85</b>
% Met Commitment with 2.0 or higher cum GPA	94%	61%	88%	<b>81%</b>
# of Short-Term Coaching Students	8	8	34	<b>50</b>
% of Commitments Met*	88%	70%	63%	<b>73%</b>
# of Commitments Not Met*	5	15	19	<b>39</b>
% of Commitments Not Met*	12%	30%	37%	<b>27%</b>
# of Drops	9	20	36	<b>65</b>
Student Contact Hours	270	339	339	<b>948</b>
# of Students on Academic Warning/Probation**	8	22	17	<b>47</b>

\*Met commitment is equal or greater than 6 hours. It's important to note that many of the students who did not meet the 6-hour commitment might have only requested assistance for a particular issue, such as Zoom help, time management, or technology assistance.

\*\*Warning students have received a GPA of <2.0 for the term in their first year at EWU; probation students had a cumulative GPA of <2.0.



“My tutor is amazing and knows how to make a group more confident.

She is so patient and kind, and it makes me want to do well in my class to show her that she is making a difference for my learning!”

- End of Quarter Survey Response, 2021-22

## CONCLUSIONS

Every year the PLUS team seeks to improve the delivery of academic support services to students at EWU. During the 2021-22 academic year, we experienced steady interest and growing demand for the use of PLUS services since the Covid-19 pandemic, and we hope to experience service usage numbers that we witnessed in 2018-19 (pre-pandemic) during the 2022-23 academic year.

As part of EWU's Academic Success and Academic Planning leadership team, PLUS works in collaboration with the Center for Academic Advising and Retention (CAAR), Institutional Research, Academic Planning, Student Success Collaborative and Degree Completion, Title III Project grant, and CAMP (College Assistance Migrant Program). Our team envisions an excellent student experience in advising, success programming, and student support from day one through graduation for all current and future EWU students.

We continue to shape and reshape our program into the 2022-23 academic year, being mindful of the student success and completion initiatives to be implemented as part of the EWU Strategic Plan. PLUS will continue its mission to serve students through a variety of services, including offering virtual and hybrid sessions for all offerings so that students can receive the support they need, no matter their location.