Executive Summary

Administrators, staff and tutors are deeply committed to support services at Cape Cod Community College. Those interviewed spoke passionately about the work they do and the students they serve. This evaluator praises their professionalism, accountability, dedication and responsiveness to the CCCC community.

The college administered the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory in the spring of 2006 and students rated tutoring availability favorably and indicated that support services adequately meet their needs. A scheduled meeting of the Student Senate conflicted with this evaluator’s visit and therefore no students were interviewed directly. A letter from a student was presented and she gave the Tutoring Center and her tutor much praise.

One of the strengths of CCCC’s programs is the longevity of its tutors. Many have ties to Cape Cod that span decades and many teach as adjuncts which provides a strong connection with the student population. Tutors were interviewed from both the Tutoring and Math Learning Center. All the tutors interviewed came from the college’s pool of professional tutors. Many work across academic support programs on campus.

This evaluator found the Tutoring Center and Math Learning Center to be strong programs overall. They fulfill their mission and are well-used by students at CCCC. Their tutoring and support services are well run, and organized. The purpose and mission of the Writing/Resource Center appears to be less clearly defined. After meeting with staff from all three centers, the suggestions below are offered to improve Academic Support Services in the Tutoring Center, Math Learning Center and Writing/Resource Center individually and globally.

Programmatic suggestions fall into the following categories:

1. **Global Suggestions across all programs**: Funding challenges, support services brochures to increase awareness of programs, faculty referral program, student referral process, tutor and program evaluation process, collaboration between programs and increased responsibilities for the Director of Academic Support Services.

2. **Suggestions specific to The Tutoring Center**: Consistent hours, Affiliations with regional and national learning assistance professionals, faculty/tutor interaction, increased student participation and space concerns.

3. **Suggestions specific to the Math Learning Center**: Computerized tracking system, expanded hours, documenting the success of students, peer and professional conferences and updating the tutorial practicum courses.
4. **Suggestions specific to the Writing/Resource Center**: clearly defined mission and objectives, name change for the center, space concerns, expanded hours, computerized tracking system, revitalized peer tutor program, faculty/center interaction.
Global Strategies for All Centers

1. **Funding Challenges:** Cape Cod has suffered funding cuts to their grant programs as have many of their sister institutions in Massachusetts. At some point the college may not be able to match those cuts dollar for dollar and the Tutoring Center, Math Learning Center and Writing/Resource may be adversely affected. A revitalized peer tutor program would help to stretch the tutoring budget for all programs. A pay scale consistent with the Math Tutoring Center would allow peers to be hired at a reduced rate of $10.00 per hour.

2. **Support Services Brochure:** A brochure or one page handout could summarize the services of the various support programs on campus including those not reviewed by this evaluator. Services and Programs on campus sometimes overlap and an outline of what the programs are and who can use them would benefit not only students but staff and faculty as well. This is not meant to replace the comprehensive guide developed by the Tutoring Center.

3. **Faculty Referral Program for tutors:** An expanded base of peer tutors would benefit all tutoring programs at CCC. One way to build the peer tutor program is to solicit faculty referrals. A referral program would give faculty a formalized way of recommending peers tutors for employment. Additionally, the program would allow for more interaction between faculty and support programs on campus.

4. **Formalized referral process for student referrals:** Student referral forms could be developed and used as a means for faculty to formally refer students to appropriate support services on campus.

5. **Evaluation Process:** A formal process for student evaluation should be implemented for all programs. Student feedback is a valuable way to measure the effectiveness of programs and respond to changes in need. Additionally, a process for coordinators to evaluate tutors must be developed. Coordinators should use a combination of observation, self-evaluation and individual meetings to assess the effectiveness of all peer and professional tutors on a yearly, if not semester, basis. The evaluation process would help to improve services and can be used to recognize exceptional tutors. The Cambridge Stratford Study Skills Institute publishes the Tutor Evaluation and Self-Assessment Tool which may be useful as a guide to developing a customized evaluation for Cape Cod. More information can be found at [http://www.cambridgestatford.com/tutoring/tutorassessments.html](http://www.cambridgestatford.com/tutoring/tutorassessments.html)

6. **Program Interaction:** Although the three support programs share the common goal of supporting student learning, there are few, if any, opportunities for staff in these three programs to interact. Often the programs support the same students but there is no formal way of sharing information. Suggestions to increase interaction would include division meetings with all three programs, team meetings to discuss strategies for working with students, group training sessions for tutors and staff from all programs.

7. **Director, Academic Support Services:** Many changes are about to take place at Cape Cod. The Dean of Learning Support Services is about to retire as is the Vice-President of Academic and Student Affairs. The position of Director of Academic Support Services, which has been vacant since 2001, is about to be filled. It is not clear to this evaluator whether the Director of Academic Support Services will also oversee the Math Learning Center and the Writing/Resource Center but there are benefits to consolidating all three programs under the leadership of one director. These include a shared vision for the three support programs; the ability to provide consistency in hours of operation and quality of services; and a streamlined budgeting process.
The Tutoring Center is well-run and highly organized center that offers tutoring on a one-to-one appointment basis with students. The most well-defined program of the three programs under review, it is the only program to have a full-time staff member completely housed in the Center. The suggestions offered are made with the intention of making an already strong program that much stronger.

1. **Consistent Hours:** The Tutoring Center’s hours change each semester. Tutoring begins between 8:00am or 9:00am and ends at 5:00pm or 7:00pm. One way to build the student base is by committing to a regular schedule that does not deviate each semester (For example, Monday to Thursday from 8:00am to 6:30pm and Fridays from 8:00am to 5:00pm). Coverage during low peak hours might be limited to one or two tutors, with the greatest number of tutors scheduled during peak times.

2. **Affiliations with Regional and National Learning Assistance Professionals:** Staff are affiliated with the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) and steps are being taken to document and certify the tutor training program currently in place. The college should consider membership in the Learning Assistance Association of New England (LAANE). LAANE holds an annual conference each fall along with regional workshops. More information about the organization can be found at [http://www.laneorganization.net/index.html](http://www.laneorganization.net/index.html). Additionally, the 2008 NADE conference will be hosted in Boston from February 26 – March 1, 2008. NADE is a dynamic conference devoted to the academic success of students. More information about NADE can be found at [http://www.nade.net/](http://www.nade.net/). Finally, the best training conference for Learning Assistance Professionals is the Winter Institute currently sponsored by the University of Texas at Austin. Held the first week of January, this conference is different than other conferences. Participants attend workshops as a group and are assigned a mentor who is a leader in the field. The Institute focuses on providing participants with experiences that can be translated into actions that can be implemented upon return to their institutions. Visit the following website for more information about the Institute [http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/~lsche/winterinstitute.htm](http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/~lsche/winterinstitute.htm).

Staff may also join LRNASST, the listserv created for learning assistance professionals. Started in 1994 at the Winter Institute, the listserv provides a way for learning assistance professionals and developmental educators to communicate and ask questions through email. Information on how to subscribe may be found at [http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/~lsche/resources/lrnasst.htm](http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/~lsche/resources/lrnasst.htm).

3. **Faculty/Tutor Interaction:** Several tutors expressed the desire to have more interaction with the academic departments. Suggestions to further expand communication would be to host an open house for faculty to meet tutors; invite faculty to Tutoring Center Meetings; and to create a faculty liaison program. Faculty liaisons would be responsible for communicating department news and other pertinent information to the tutoring center. Faculty Liaisons could also be instrumental in identifying potential peer tutors for employment.

4. **Increased Student Participation:** One way to increase awareness among students is to bring the Tutoring Center to them. Staff and Tutors could visit classrooms at the beginning of the semester and at mid-term to promote the Tutoring Center. A brief description of the Center, along with the newly developed SOS Tutoring Guide could be discussed and distributed.

5. **Space Concerns:** Staff and Tutors offered praise for the new Tutoring Center in the Lorusso Applied Technology Center. One concern however, is that the space will be inadequate as student usage grows. With the Writing/Resource Center (W/RC) located directly beside the Tutoring Center, one suggestion would be to relocate several of the English and ESL tutors to that room to free up space in the Tutoring Center to accommodate additional students.
Math Learning Center

The Math Learning Center offers drop-in tutoring for students enrolled in math and science courses. It is staffed by a full-time faculty member of the math department with a course release and a group of both professional and peer tutors, the only program covered under the review that utilizes them. Suggestions are offered to more accurately document services and to assess their effectiveness.

1. **Computerized Tracking:** While the Math Learning Center (MLC) appears to be well used by students, the center uses a pencil and paper method to track visits. If students do not sign in, or write illegibly, the resulting data is incomplete. Implementation of a computerized system would more accurately reflect the number of students and visits in the MLC. The Tutoring Center uses Time Trade for online appointment scheduling. Suggestions would be to look into whether this system can be adapted to capture the drop-in nature of tutoring in the MLC. In the future, if the college transitions to a "home-grown" appointment system, adaptations should be made in order to track drop-in visits in the MLC and the W/RC. Other systems currently on the market that may meet the needs of the college are: Tutortrac, Accutrack and Red Canyon Systems. Their respective websites are: [http://www.tutortrac.com/info_main.html](http://www.tutortrac.com/info_main.html), [http://www.accutrack.org/indexMain.htm](http://www.accutrack.org/indexMain.htm) and [http://www.redcanyon.com/index.html](http://www.redcanyon.com/index.html).

2. **Expanded Hours:** The MLC is able to utilize peer tutors in addition to professionals. The MLC is currently staffed Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 2:00pm. These hours change each semester based on availability of tutors. Anecdotal accounts indicate that students would like the center to be open later in the afternoon. In order to support expanded hours, suggestions would be to determine peak hours and schedule tutors based on those patterns. Many other colleges schedule a limited number of tutors in the early morning hours and late in the day; and have the majority of their staff scheduled during times of heavy usage.

3. **Effectiveness of Program:** Unlike the Tutoring Center, it appears that the MLC does not collect data on student progress in courses. Suggestions include tracking completion rates of students who are tutored and final grades in classes to measure the effectiveness of tutoring. Information gathered would be instrumental in grant writing and budget proposals.

4. **Conference attendance:** Attendance annually at the New England Mathematical Association of Two Year Colleges (NEMATYC) would not only be beneficial for the MLC supervisor, but for peer and professional tutors as well ([http://www.nematyc.org/](http://www.nematyc.org/)). Tutors might also participate in the LAANE conference and peer tutors in the New England Peer Tutor Association (NEPTA).

5. **Tutor Training:** The MTU 200 course is used as a recruitment tool for peer tutors in the MLC. Most recently the course is run as an independent study due to low enrollment. The college might consider revamping both the MTU 200 course and the ETU 100 course to create one general course that will train peers to work in any of the tutoring programs on campus. Faculty could refer exceptional students to the course which would include coursework on methods and strategies for tutoring, in addition to a practicum in one of the tutoring areas on campus.
Writing/Resource Center

The Writing/Resource Center (W/RC) offers drop-in writing assistance. The program is not as clearly defined as the Tutoring Center and Math Learning Center. It is staffed by a part-time coordinator. Suggestions are offered for defining mission and program objectives, name change for center, expanded hours of operation, computerized tracking system, revitalization of peer tutor program, and increased interaction with faculty.

1. **Clearly defined mission and objectives:** The Writing/Resource Center Task Force was convened in November of 2006 to address issues facing the W/RC. This evaluator found that one of the major issues that surround the W/RC is confusion about the role of the center. The current Writing/Resource Center does not appear to have a clearly defined mission or stated objectives. The center must also find a way to distinguish its services from those of the Tutoring Center and the new online tutoring platform etutoring.org. Finally, the center should also consider reinstating workshops to more actively engage the student population. These workshops should be closely aligned with classroom assignments to meet the needs of students and faculty.

2. **Name change:** A name change to more accurately reflect the mission of the center should be entertained. Possible suggestions would be the Academic Resource and Writing Center, The Writing Lab, The Writing Assistance Center or Center for Writing Support. More suggestions can be found at [http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/~lsche/about/names.htm](http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/~lsche/about/names.htm).

3. **Space concerns:** Formally housed in the North/South Connector near faculty offices, the center became an overflow room for the Open Computer Lab and was often used as classroom space. The W/RC moved to the new Lorusso Applied Technology Building in the fall of 2006 and is currently located beside the Tutoring Center. Concerns that students would not travel across campus to the new space seem to be unfounded as the Tutoring Center is enjoying increased usage. And documentation, before and after the move, does not appear to show a decrease in student usage for the W/RC. Increased marketing to faculty, staff and students would help to increase awareness of the new location. Unlike the Tutoring Center, there are very few flyers posted around campus that advertise the Center’s hours and location.

**Expanded Hours:** The W/RC is currently staffed by a part-time coordinator. The center is open approximately twenty hours per week and is dependent on the coordinator’s schedule. To continue to provide consistent hours, the college should work to minimize changes in the W/RC schedule by limiting classes scheduled in the Center to evening hours. If the schedule is not consistent, students find other resources that will meet their needs.

To increase hours the college might consider relocating several writing tutors from the Tutoring Center to the W/RC. This would provide much needed coverage to keep the Center open more hours and would also free up space in the Tutoring Center for tutoring in other subjects. This would also lead to more collaboration between the Tutoring Center and W/RC.

4. **Computerized Tracking:** Like the Math Learning Center, the W/RC uses a pencil and paper method to track visits. A computerized tracking system would not only provide a more accurate system of documentation, but would also provide assistance in staffing.

5. **Peer Tutor Program:** In order to support expanded hours in its programs, the college must begin to look at ways to stretch limited funds without cutting services to students. One model that the W/RC might consider is the use of peer tutors who earn credit for tutoring in the Center. Students would be selected and recommended by English faculty based on their competency in writing and their communication skills.
6. **Increased faculty interaction**: Suggestions to increase interaction with faculty include expanding membership on the W/R/C Task Force to include members of other academic departments. Additionally, a system for reporting on the progress of students who visit the Center would provide faculty with more information. Faculty might also consider building the W/R/C into a class assignment to give students more exposure to the Center.