

## **National Association of Communication Centers Tutor Training and Certification Application Form**

Your application will need to address the following questions. Please see the full certification document at the end of this form for additional information about each section. You are welcome to either respond to each of these questions on this form or, if you are attaching a supporting document such as a staff handbook, refer the committee to specific pages of a document.

A review committee (consisting of the NACC immediate past chair, chair, vice-chair, and vice-chair elect) will view the application and respond to the submitter within six weeks. Send all applications to Ted Sheckels at [tsheckel@rnc.edu](mailto:tsheckel@rnc.edu).

### **Basic center information:**

**Name of person submitting application:** Luke LeFebvre

**Email address:** [luke.lefebvre@csn.edu](mailto:luke.lefebvre@csn.edu)

**Phone number:** (702) 651-5073

**Institution:** College of Southern Nevada

**Title of center:** Communication Labs

**Director of center:** Luke LeFebvre

### **Number of years the center has existed?**

The Cheyenne Campus Communication Lab was founded in the fall of 2005, the Henderson Campus Communication Lab was founded in the fall of 2008, and the West Charleston Communication Lab was founded in the fall of 2009.

### **Where is the center housed (physically, in terms of institutional structure, and funding)?**

At each campus the Communication Labs have been designated space in the computer lab area. Institutionally the Communication Labs are part of the Department of Communication. The Communication Labs are funded through designated funds from student tuition.

### **How many staff members work in the center (tutors/consultants and support staff)?**

As of the fall 2011 semester a total of 11 staff members are employed at the Communication Labs. The specific titles and numbers for those employed at our facilities are: peer tutors (4), part-time faculty (4), on-site campus liaisons (2), and director (1).

**Has anyone on staff attended either a National Association of Communication Centers conference or a National Communication Association Communication Centers Section session (*advisable but not required*)?**

Yes, I have attended the 2011 National Association of Communication Centers conference and the 2010 and 2011 National Communication Association Communication Centers Section session. Also, I will be attending the 2012 NACC conference at Eastern Kentucky University.

**Are there currently staff members who are members of the NCA Communication Centers section (*advisable but not required*)?**

Yes, I am a member of the NCA Communication Centers Section.

**Specific staff selection and training information:**

**Section 1: Selection of Tutoring Staff.** *Please explain how you select your tutors.*

Tutorial staff consists of two populations: (1) students and (2) part-time faculty.

*Peer tutors.* Students are recruited primarily from the introductory communication course. These students who are recruited and apply to be employed as a tutor for the Communication Labs complete a tutor application and submit an unofficial, up-to-date transcript for review. The tutor application is assessed for the criteria described below:

- Have at least 12 hours of undergraduate work completed with an earned overall college grade point average of at least 3.2; and
- Have earned A- or higher in the introductory communication course.

If the applicant meets these criteria an interview is conducted with the student. During the interview the applicant is asked a number of questions and provided with specific tutoring scenarios. Most importantly the director assesses the applicant's ability to demonstrate:

- Immediate communication behaviors
- Competency with the introductory content, and
- Communicate an interest in assisting other students from varied backgrounds and skill levels.

After the interview, within 48 hours, the applicant is notified of the outcome.

*Part-time faculty.* Staff members for the Communication Labs are recruited from the part-time faculty who instruct the introductory communication course. These individuals are selected based on the criteria described below:

- Semester student feedback evaluations of the instructor;
- Teaching observation scores for the previous semester; and

- Recommendations of the Lead Faculty and Departmental Chair.

## **Section 2: Training.** *Please tell us how you initially train your staff.*

### **A. Time On-Task**

Tutors are provided 18 hours of initial training prior to employment at the Communication Labs. Once employed in the Communication Labs each tutor is observed by a liaison or the director (depending on the campus location) weekly throughout the semester to build rapport and for observation purposes to allow for formative and summative feedback about the tutor's abilities.

### **B. Modes**

The modes of training take different forms from one-on-one to group exercises depending on the content to be learned. For example, the *Outline Building* session is usually conducted using the Think-Pair-Share (Barkley, Cross, & Major, 2005) technique. The training sessions are also influenced by the number of new tutors being hired for the semester.

### **C. Topics**

#### **1. Overview**

The College of Southern Nevada's (2010) mission states: "The College of Southern Nevada creates opportunities and changes lives through access to quality teaching, *services*, and experiences that enrich our diverse community."

The Department of Communication's (2010) mission states: "The mission of the Department of Communication is to provide students with a foundation in communication theory and practice that prepares them with effective communication skills to enhance their academic, personal and professional lives."

Each of these mission statements set the foundation for the Communication Labs' purpose, which is to assist students develop their communication skills and abilities to be competent communicators in and beyond the classroom. In order to fulfill the mission of the college and department the current training of our tutors is comprised of 11 different sessions. Each of these training sessions has been described below under the appropriate subheading.

#### **2. Tutoring Expertise**

New Employee Orientation (2 hrs.): New staff hires are required to complete payroll paperwork, receive orientation regarding institutional employment, verify identity and eligibility for employment, and provided information about the policies, procedures, and resources available at the College of Southern Nevada.

Building Blocks for Effective Tutoring (3 hrs.): The focus of this training session provides tutors with how to establish a friendly and task-oriented atmosphere for students seeking assistance with their communication related assignments.

Helping Non-Native English Speakers (1 hr.): The focus of this training session provides tutors with how to adapt and provide accessible assistance to students whose primary language is not English.

Helping Students with Disabilities (2 hrs.): The focus of this training session provides tutors with how to provide appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities and discuss the various types of disabilities that might be found in higher education.

Overcoming Reading Barriers (1 hr.): The focus of this training session provides tutors with how to identify reading barriers, remedial- and pre-reading strategies, and how to assist students to increase their reading abilities.

Helping the Disadvantaged Non-Traditional Student (2 hrs.): The focus of this training session provides tutors with strategies for fostering a supportive one-on-one interaction with adult learners.

## **2. Communication Instructional Expertise**

New Employee Orientation to the Communication Lab (2 hrs.): The focus of this training session orients new employees to the procedures and protocols expected in the Communication Labs. The main points of this session are as follows: (a) mission and outcomes for the Communication Labs, (b) tutor communicative behavior, (c) course section tours, (d) tracking consultations, and (e) laboratory management.

Outline Building (1 hr.): The focus of this training session allows tutors to examine the mechanics of constructing an outline, evaluation of the components/parts, and analysis of the various stylistic components of outline building. Training requires tutors to compare and contrast different approaches to outlining and what the differences are between outlines (many of our faculty have various outline building strategies and requirements for their students) and speaker notes. Each outline is stored on the Communication Labs' course management system for retrieval and review prior to or during a consultation session for all tutors.

Editing Speeches (1 hr.): The focus of this training session provides tutors with strategies for identifying content for inclusion and exclusion, economic word usage and succinct message construction, source integration and oral crediting tips, and how to convert outlines to speaker notes.

Organization of the Speech (1 hr.): The focus of this training session provides tutors with an overview of different arrangement patterns for organizing main points and how to transition between main points fluidly.

Video Feedback (2 hrs.): The focus of this training session provides tutors with nonverbal and verbal assessment strategies for evaluating and providing feedback to students when observing a student's video feedback of her or his speechmaking performance.

#### **4. Administrative Expertise**

The primary administrative task for the tutors is the documentation of student consultations.

*Tracking Consultations.* Each tutor has been trained to systematically document each consultation that occurs at the Communication Labs. This systematic process consists of collecting, completing, digitizing, transcribing, and filing the consultation form and its information.

*Digital Video/Video Streaming.* Tutors also receive training in how to operate the digital video/video streaming recording equipment housed in the Whisper Rooms for capturing student practice sessions of speeches or other activities.

*Emergency Procedures.* All tutors have been informed of the emergency procedures for handling various situations with students that may occur in the Communication Labs.

*Referral Abilities.* Each tutor has been trained on how to direct students to other services on campus. Additionally signage is included in each laboratory that provides information on other services at the institution.

### **Section 3: Continuing Evaluation of Tutors.** *Please tell us how you work with tutors once they are hired and trained.*

Following the hiring and training process tutors are scheduled to work in the Communication Labs, where they schedule overlaps with the director or campus liaison (depending on campus assignment). Weekly the tutor is able to work with the director or campus liaison during student consultations. These weekly overlaps also allow for tutors to ask questions and for the director or liaison to build a rapport with the tutors. The weekly overlaps also allow for observation and formative feedback for the tutor. The director also visits each Communication Lab every other week to ensure the labs are functioning appropriately and/or provide assistance as necessary. Finally, a mid-semester meeting is held, usually on a Saturday, by the director that includes all tutors. This meeting addresses any issues and answers questions that have arisen thus far in the semester, incorporates a team building exercise, and provides tutors with student feedback about the consultations that have occurred during the semester. During these meetings each individual tutor caucuses with the Communication Labs Coordinator to receive their mid-semester evaluation of their performance and receive the feedback from the student consultations that have occurred during the semester.