COLA 100E COMMON READER
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FINDING SUCCESS IN VIRTUAL TUTORING
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A central part of COLA 100E’s first-year seminar curriculum is the common reader selection. Changing every year, this book provides a shared and unique intellectual experience for a given year’s cohort. The book--sometimes a novel, sometimes a memoir--is a launch pad for deep conversations that critically interweave all the elements of the class together: academic and personal success, major and career exploration, and the University Undergraduate Learning Outcomes.

For academic year 2019-2020, we read *The Work: Searching for a Life That Matters*, by Wes Moore. In this 2015 memoir, Moore describes the several uncertain years immediately after his college graduation, as he took on additional learning opportunities, tested various professions, and sought to design a purposeful life and career for himself. Moore's search to find meaningful work takes place against a backdrop of deep global uncertainty; the book begins with the losses of 9/11 and reaches its climax with the 2008 recession.

What conversations did this book spark? If you were able to listen in on a COLA 100E classroom in the past year, here is what you would have heard, according to our team of COLA 100E instructors:

Dr. Joe Ervin: "*The Work* inspired critical conversations around expectations and goals. Particularly, I was impressed with our class discussions on themes of uncertainty about the future, unexpected change, job satisfaction versus salary, and the lifelong process of searching for meaning."

Dr. Hanna Andrews: "*The Work* allowed us to have extremely meaningful conversations throughout the semester—considering our own personal definitions of abstract ideas like ‘stability’ and ‘happiness’—and to raise critical questions, like when to seek out mentors’ advice and when to follow a gut instinct and strike out on our own. Primarily, though, Wes Moore’s focus on service throughout the book allowed us to envision what role serving others might play in our own lives, no matter which major or profession we ultimately choose."
Ashley Jagodzinski: “Students in a wide variety of areas—from the medical field to the humanities to business and hospitality—found The Work to be an inspiring text, one that helped them parse out what it means to live an interesting and meaningful life. Several students told me in their Culminating Writing Projects that Moore’s message about the link between service and purpose helped them to clarify their own purposes in choosing a major. . . [T]his was a book that grew on both me and students.”

Kevin Sebastian: “[S]tudents were able to reflect on what success (whether academic, professional, or personal) means to them, and how the notion of service (which in our class we broadly characterized as actions that benefit that which is beyond the self) is folded into that definition. Relatedly, the text allowed the class to investigate the larger purpose of a liberal arts education, the why beyond the what, giving students opportunities to really sincerely ask themselves why they’re in college, why (and how) all of their classes contribute to their learning, and why they’re in this particular class, at this particular hour, during this particular semester, in this particular institution.”

I can’t say it any better than these instructors have. The Work was central to the work of COLA 100E; it encouraged students—and faculty!—to reflect on their passion, their purpose, and their why. For the COLA 100E team, our purpose is to support every COLA 100E student, as they find their purpose at UNLV and in the world. In the midst of much uncertainty, that much is certain. In Moore’s own words, we find our purpose when we remember “that independent thought and love-inspired vision are the greatest gifts we have been given, and that the chance to serve is the truest way of saying thank you” (p. 198). To all of our COLA 100E students: thank you for your thoughtful conversations this academic year!

The final month of the spring semester is always a time of celebration for Student-Athlete Academic Services. In the final weeks before graduation SAAS takes the opportunity to honor the outstanding academic accomplishments of its student-athletes. The annual Scarlet & Gray Awards have always taken place at the MGM Grand, and students are given the opportunity to dress in formal attire, walk a red carpet, and cheer on their peers as they receive their awards. On Friday, May 8th, at 5:00p.m., SAAS premiered the first ever virtual Scarlet & Gray Awards Show live via YouTube. The show featured pre-recorded videos of coaches and staff dressed for the occasion, as well as student-athlete participation through Tik Tok showing off their formal attire. The event also utilized a student-athlete as an emcee as he read all of the award nominees and winners to a live audience of over 200 viewers. The YouTube chat feature was used as a way for staff, family, and friends, to congratulate the winners in real-time.
In addition, SAAS also found a way to recognize the Spring 2020 graduates in a virtual format. Similar to the Scarlet & Gray Awards, SAAS partnered with UNLV Athletics to debut a “Senior Send-Off” ceremony on YouTube. This event premiered on Friday, May 15th, and was also viewed by well over 200 participants. Not only was every graduating student-athlete honored, but their families also sent in pre-recorded congratulatory videos that aired after the ceremony. Once again the YouTube chat feature was turned on to allow live interaction.

Lastly, on Saturday, May 16th, SAAS and UNLV Athletics participated in a Graduation Caravan that included three separate routes through the Las Vegas Valley. In total, the caravan traveled 138 miles and honored 24 local graduating student-athletes at their homes. SAAS, coaches, and athletic staff decorated their cars, honked, and took pictures and video for social media.

AN INTERVIEW WITH AN ASC PEER MENTOR: GRETA VALDES
- BY ELIZABETH JOHNSON

Greta’s preferred pronouns are she/her. She is a pre-business major at the Lee Business School. Greta started her academic career as an Exploring Business Pathway major. She was recognized as Sophomore of the Year for the ASC and today, works hard with Exploring students as a peer mentor. She is a first-generation undergraduate student whose family is from Cuba, a Las Vegas native and an organized, concise, and detail-orientated individual. Her favorite pastime is acrylic painting, which is an artform that allows her mind and creativity to roam free.

Biggest Achievement Thus Far:
When Greta was asked if she feels as if she is the same person she was when she started at UNLV she stated:

I am a lot more confident in my abilities as an undergrad, and I feel like I have grown and learned so much since my first semester. Not just about higher education, but about people, communication, and life as a whole! Every day has been a learning opportunity for me since
being here. I am most proud of my work as a peer mentor, which I feel is my biggest achievement, working alongside peer mentors and advisors, and knowing that I am a part of something that aims to help first-year students succeed at UNLV has been an unforgettable experience.

**Getting Involved:**
I am a member of UNLV's chapter of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, I work as a peer mentor with the Academic Success Center, and I am a proud member of the Clark County Lunch Assistance Fund, a small but hardworking club here at UNLV.

“Greta is a great communicator. As her supervisor for the peer mentor program, I find her very detail orientated and efficient. She makes sure to communicate any changes or concerns via email. She also follows up if anything changes. As an advisor, I love that she strives to be proactive not reactive. Greta is making great contributions to the campus community and this has not been without overcoming personal challenges. Greta is a first-generation college student with immigrant parents who have faced language barriers. Through bilingualism she has been able to help her parents communicate and further the family business in Las Vegas by acting as their online sales and marketing representative.” - **Tiffany Schmier, Senior Academic Advisor**

**Unique Experience:**

*As a first-generation student:*
Being a first-generation college student has been a really rewarding experience. Nothing makes me happier than making my parents proud.

As a peer mentor, and someone who is passionate about helping others:
I've shared that feeling that many people often have - feeling alone, misunderstood, helpless - I don’t wish that feeling onto anyone, so helping other people through my work and life is the best experience that I have had the privilege of being a part of.

“Greta is an integral part of the peer mentor team. Though she’s only a year ahead of her mentees, she is able to provide them with guidance and connect them to campus. Greta is responsive, dedicated, and empathetic. We are lucky to have her on our team!” - **Nicole Stella, Assistant Director of Academic Advising and RPC**

**Words of Encouragement:**

My first day at school was not as graceful as I would have hoped - I felt scared, questioning whether going to UNLV was really the right choice for me. I think being an Exploring major really helped to reassure me that I belong here, and that I have so much at my disposal to help me succeed.

The biggest misconception that people have
about Exploring majors is that we are clueless in our career and educational endeavors - Exploring majors are inquirers, thinkers, analyzers. Going through my first two years of college as an Exploring - Business Pathway major was the best thing I could have done! I discovered so much about career and major options and how different processes work.

To current UNLV students I would say this: If you think you can't, you can. You are not alone in this journey, and though there may be obstacles along the way there is no doubt you have the skill, ambition, and potential to succeed in your higher education. It's on your time and by your means. Don't give up, no matter how heavy the storm hits.

"Greta was an outstanding student in COLA 100E, consistently prepared, engaged, and ready to make the most of the class. I am particularly thrilled to see Greta take on leadership opportunities so early in her UNLV career, and I think it is especially meaningful that she is putting her time into working with first-year students to ensure they, like her, have a positive experience at UNLV." - Dr. Emily Shreve who served as Greta's COLAS 100E instructor

COVID-19:
Prior to COVID-19, I was really focusing on my studies as well as strengthening personal relationships. It's important to find a balance, so it's been an interesting experience continuing to go about life from just inside my home. The advisors at the ASC have been so helpful to me and answer any and all questions I have! Additionally, I've been available to my mentees to help them stay on track throughout the transition by providing them information and directing them to resources available to them. Always remember you can speak to your advisor if you need any assistance and if they cannot provide it to you, they can refer you to the right resources.

Future Plans:
In the not-so-distant future I hope to become a CPA and CMA, and work as an accountant in the business world. I would love to potentially do some work in higher education as well. I'd love to continue helping students through work as an advisor or counselor. I think that would be really cool! I just love being on a campus.

Lightning Round:
First job?
A sales rep

What music are you listening to right now?
The Killers, of course.
Favorite food?
Chicken - fried chicken, grilled chicken, chicken nuggets, or chicken noodle soup!

Movies or the ballgame?
The movies!

Favorite movie?
Interstellar

Modern convenience you can't live without?
Online shopping

What types of stores?
I really love shopping on Amazon for anything and everything, even if I don’t really need it! I also love Sephora, Ulta, and H&M.

Favorite vacation spot?
Anywhere that there’s nature, or where I can go swimming.

Do you visit Cuba often?
I haven’t been to Cuba in a while, but I definitely plan to go when I get the chance. The beaches are incredibly beautiful!

Who is a person, living or dead, that you would like to meet but have not had the chance to meet them yet?
Lin Manuel Miranda

May I ask why?
Lin Manuel is a child of immigrants who is incredibly creative and inspiring to me. Seeing representation like him as a person who is LatinX myself, I really look up to him and his work.

Where is a place you would like to visit but have not yet had the chance to go?
I really want to travel throughout Europe and see the older architecture and visit museums to feel the history.

Coffee or tea?
I once waited in line for over 30 minutes just to get some iced coffee! So I’d say coffee but I do love black tea as well!

Playlist:
We asked Greta to create a playlist that would describe her:
“Wait For It” - Leslie Odom Jr. (I am patient and thorough in my life and work, I’m willing to wait for the payoff, and the good things that are to come).

“Under Pressure” - Queen (The stress and pressure of the real world is ever so present, but I think I work best under pressure).
“These Are The Days Of Our Lives” - Queen (I’m a very nostalgic person and I’m always looking back on my life. I love to make memories and tell stories- I’ve got a scrapbook to prove it!)

“I Wanna Get Better” - Bleachers (If there’s an opportunity for me to grow and better myself, I’ll take it. I wanna get better and improve every day in all aspects of my life).

“For Reasons Unknown” - The Killers (Some things in life are a mystery, so just roll with the punches and seize the day).

BRIDGING THE WAY TO VIRTUAL SUMMER PROGRAMMING

- BY ALLISON THIBAULT FOX AND CHEYENNE ROGERS

“Gain confidence, grow math skills, and save time and money.” This was, and continues to be, the mission of the Math Bridge program, offered by the Academic Success Center. Traditionally, Math Bridge welcomes local incoming UNLV students to the campus during the summer months for either a five- or eight-week session. Students work intensely on their math skills and are introduced to a variety of UNLV support services available to them in future semesters. Daily instruction and tutoring support are coupled with a robust growth-mindset centered curriculum to help students achieve their ultimate goal: to place into a higher-level math course needed for their declared major. Though the goal and mission of this valuable program has not shifted, the format for Summer 2020 became adaptable to the current COVID-19 situation.

For the first time ever, the Academic Success Center is excited to offer Math Bridge exclusively online. The program will continue to provide exceptional support and instruction for UNLV students in this new virtual format while ensuring the health and safety of students and staff as the community is affected by COVID-19. Through ALEKS, UNLV’s WebCampus, Webex, and Panopto software the program will bring students quality curriculum, live tutoring, and peer interactions that will help them build a strong foundation and community as they transition to UNLV. Though this program is virtual, students will still adhere to program dates and times to allow for tutoring and periodic synchronous meetings. To ensure best practices in an online learning environment, most content will be delivered asynchronously with support from our staff.

Though Math Bridge’s primary goal is to help UNLV students gain confidence and grow math skills, while saving money and time, students enrolled in this program get exposed to critical campus resources and learning strategies necessary for academic success. Each week the program offers presentations such as combatting math anxiety with a growth mindset, financial
literacy, information on tutoring and supplemental instruction, and academic success coaching. Each presentation offered is selected with a goal of equipping students with critical information to support a smooth transition to the university. These live presentations also allow students to make connections with the staff members on campus and start to integrate into our UNLV community.

During this ever-changing state of the university, the Academic Success Center has worked diligently to ensure that the same level of service and support from past semesters is still being offered to UNLV students. Services that were traditionally never offered online, such as Math Bridge, are now accessible to students with the same quality as the in-person programs. Another example of this is Academic Success Coaching. Academic Success Coaches work with students on soft skills development. The Academic Success Coaches have continued to offer one-on-one, specialized support to undergraduate students through a virtual environment utilizing Webex.

Students can schedule a virtual coaching appointment Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The coaches are even available through the summer to assist students taking summer term courses.

The Academic Success Center has adapted to the swift, but necessary, change to supporting UNLV's students from afar.

FINDING SUCCESS IN VIRTUAL TUTORING AND SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION

- By Michael Ramirez

On March 23rd, the Academic Success Center’s (ASC) Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction (SI) programs, along with other important student services at the ASC, continued their operations using a fully online-delivery model to support UNLV students in response to COVID-19. In lieu of physical drop-in locations on campus, ASC Tutoring and SI were made available through the online platforms Zoom and Webex.

ASC Tutoring utilized the Zoom platform, staffed by a rotating schedule of tutors and Front Desk Managers (FDM) from the Lied Library (LLB) Tutoring Lab and the Engineering Tutoring Center; SI Leaders facilitated sessions and office hours using the Webex online platform. These virtual locations were made available during the same times as the physical locations prior to the transition, and student staff members rose to the occasion to ensure the same high level of
 Prior to the March 23rd launch, ASC faculty members worked remotely during the Spring Break Recess to coordinate the creation of video tutorials so that UNLV students and campus partners could learn how the new virtual resources could be accessed and utilized. Subsequently, these videos were published on the ASC website, and were distributed across campus to academic and administrative faculty, advising centers, and were also shared with students through social media and direct email campaigns.

The LLB Tutoring Lab and Engineering Tutoring Center were each given individual meeting room ID numbers. Students were able to access the virtual tutoring locations by visiting the Zoom webpage and entering the corresponding meeting ID to join the desired location. Once admitted into the virtual location by an FDM serving as host, UNLV students were then prompted to provide their NSHE number and requested course before being placed into a breakout room with other students and tutors working on similar material.

Students wishing to access virtual SI sessions and office hours were able to do so by visiting the UNLV Webex online portal, and entering a corresponding meeting ID number assigned to their SI Leader. These Meeting ID numbers were provided directly by the SI Leaders to students as well as listed on the announcements section of the ASC SI webpage. Similar to our physical locations, SI Leaders prompted students for their NSHE number prior to remaining in the virtual SI session; and SI Leaders facilitated planned collaborative activities in sequence with course material.

During an unprecedented time in UNLV history, student and professional staff members continued to meet the challenge of providing learning support through virtual tutoring and SI. These ASC resources will continue to be available for UNLV students during the Summer II and III terms as well as the Fall semester. Whatever may come, ASC services will strive for success in all we do, and students can continue to expect the same high quality service provided through our virtual resources as they would expect at our physical locations. Each virtual environment will continue to provide opportunities for student community and discussions on historically difficult content, and to ultimately become portals of empowerment to tackle challenging course material.

Stay safe and stay healthy, Rebels! If you have any questions regarding access to the virtual tutoring or SI locations, please feel free to contact us by phone or email.

LLB Tutoring Lab
Phone: 702-895-3199
Email: tutoring@unlv.edu

Engineering Tutoring Center
Phone: 702-895-2910
Email: engtutoring@unlv.edu
Supplemental Instruction
Phone: 702-774-4625
Email: si@unlv.edu

Thank you for your support!

UNLV ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER

HOW YOU CAN
SUCCEED BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

UTILIZING ASC SERVICES

- Academic Advising
  for exploring, athletic, and non-degree seeking students
- Math Bridge
  for incoming freshmen looking to place in a higher math class
- Coaching
  for students who want to develop strategies to succeed
- Supplemental Instruction
  for additional course concepts and learning strategies
- Tutoring
  for students who need an extra hand in a variety of classes

Every year, the average number of incoming freshmen that interact with ASC learning support has increased. 1534 students of our Fall 2019 Freshmen class chose to use our services in the 2019-2020 academic year.

CASES OF SUCCESS

- 285 Exploring students earned the Dean’s Honor List distinction in Fall 2019 (GPA greater than 3.5)
- UNLV Student-Athletes achieved the highest department-wide GPA of 3.15 cumulative GPA on record in the

Students who use our services
STAY CONNECTED WITH US
@UNLV_ASC

Visit our website
www.unlv.edu/asc

ACHIEVING SUCCESS IS AN EASIER PROCESS THAN YOU THINK

Identify where you are struggling academically
Visit our website to learn which learning support service is best for you
Connect with our coaches, tutors, S.I. leaders, and advisors
Visit the Academic Success Center to get more information on any of our services

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Cumulative GPA of record in the Spring 2020 semester
• Over 1000 students recognized at the ASC’s 2020 Virtual Honor’s Ceremony
find more success in the classroom, and reason to finish their degrees.

Advising | Coaching | Tutoring | Supplemental Instruction | Bridge Programs | Dual Enrollment |
First-Year Seminars | Second-Year Seminars | Student-Athlete Academic Services