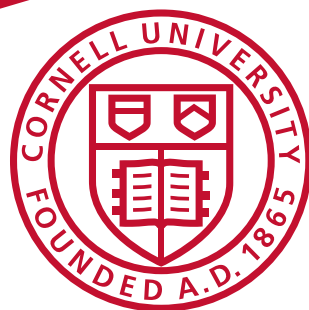
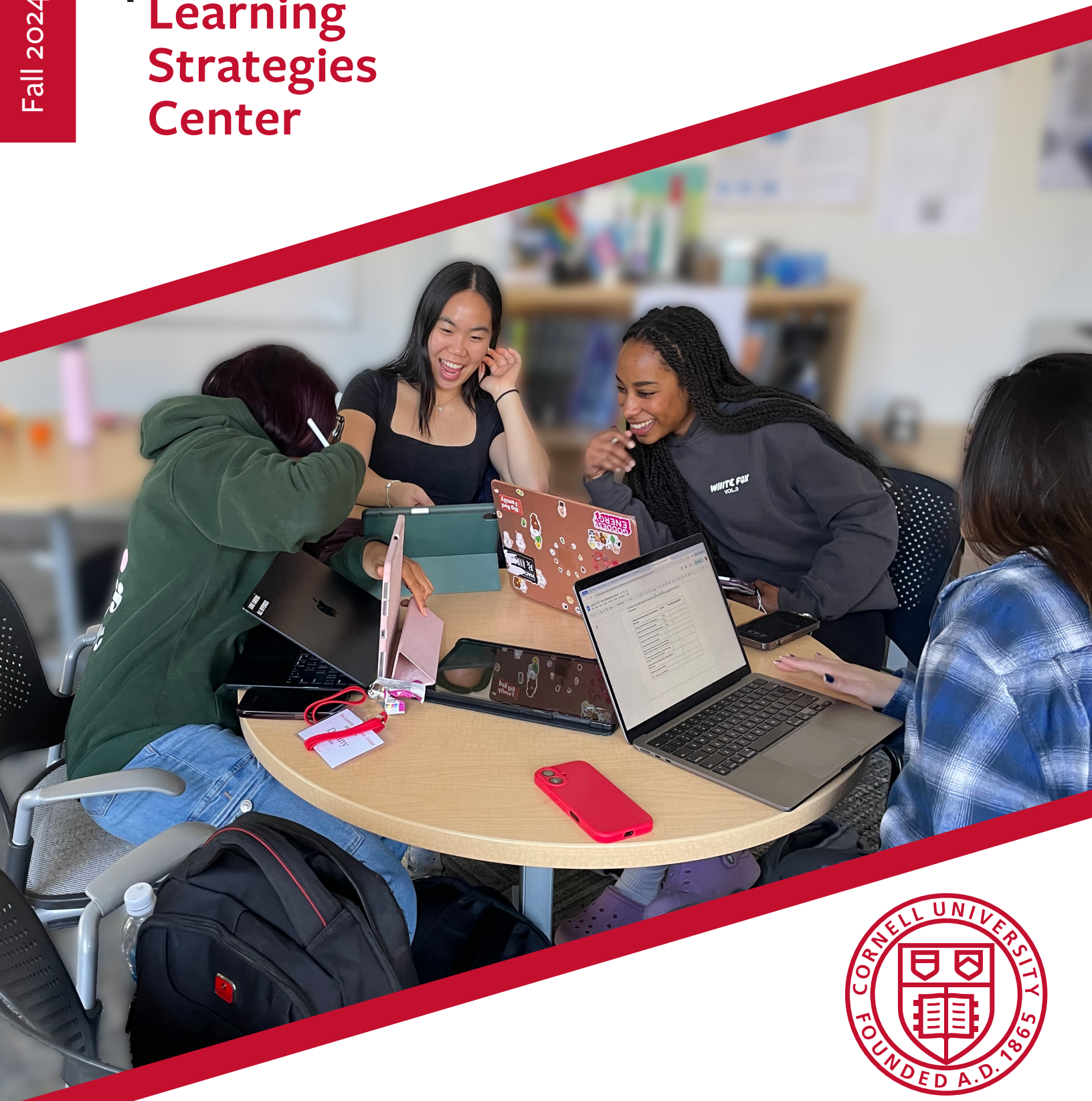


Fall 2024 & Spring 2025

Annual Report: Learning Together

Learning
Strategies
Center



From the Director

At the Learning Strategies Center (LSC), our mission remains unwavering: to ensure Cornell students, regardless of their backgrounds, are equipped to thrive. As Cornell continues to uphold its rigorous academic standards, we recognize that the transition to college-level learning presents unique challenges for many students. Through our support network of study skills development, tutoring services, supplemental courses, and scholarships, the LSC provides multiple pathways for students to access the support they need to excel.



The upcoming year begins a period of strategic innovation for the LSC. We are thoughtfully integrating new technologies, including generative AI tools, to enhance our operational efficiency and allow our staff to focus on the high-impact, human-centered support that defines our work. Simultaneously, we are expanding our programming to help students navigate the evolving digital academic landscape with critical thinking and ethical awareness. Central to our evolution is the continual development of peer-to-peer academic support models. We are piloting new tutoring deployments and peer-led initiatives that not only address academic support gaps but also create scalable solutions for the future. These models reflect our deep understanding that students often learn most effectively from their peers, while creating opportunities to expand our reach and impact across the student body.

Throughout these developments, our fundamental approach remains holistic. We understand that learning doesn't happen in isolation, and we continue to address student needs comprehensively, helping them build connections with peers, develop effective study habits, and maintain the engagement, health, and motivation essential for academic success.

I continue to be impressed by the dedication of our staff and their ability to provide meaningful support to thousands of students each semester. Their work is truly transformative, and I regularly witness how our programs instill in students the confidence that with hard work and appropriate support, they can master even the most challenging coursework.

The LSC continues to serve a vital and transformative role for students and the university as a whole. I am excited to guide our collaborative efforts as we implement these strategic initiatives, always keeping our focus on what matters most: empowering every student to reach their full potential and succeed in their academic journey.

Amy M. Godert, Ph.D.
Director, LSC

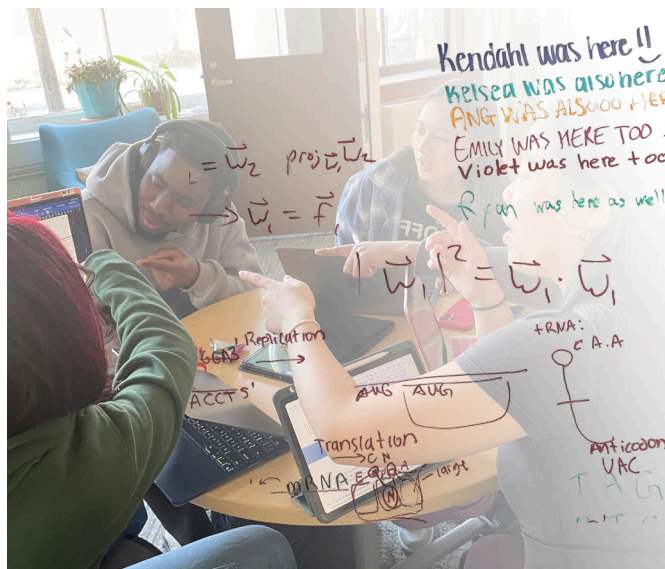


Cornell University



Learning Together

The LSC provides many opportunities for students to harness the benefits of peer work as they master Cornell's challenging courses. LSC drop-in group tutoring allows students who come with one question to hear other questions posed by their peers—questions they can benefit from, but which they didn't yet know to ask. LSC tutors serve as important role models who foster caring, collaborative learning environments in LSC spaces across campus. LSC supplemental courses and problem-solving sessions always include facilitated, structured time for students to work together. Here's what our students have shared about the benefits of learning with peers:



“ Working with other students has been really helpful for me, because it allows me to see how others approach problems.

“ Concepts stick better because of the collaborative aspect, since it forces me to discuss my thinking with a classmate.

“ [LSC supplemental classes offer] a helpful opportunity to ask questions and get feedback in a collaborative, small group.

Study Partners

Academic Year	2023-2024	2024-2025*
Unique Students	844	1123
Total Requests	2811	3897
Unique Courses	576	979
Matches	1459	1830
Groups	618	771

*after implementing a new, universal Canvas announcement

Study partner matching provides a non-facilitated opportunity for students in every Cornell class to find peers to study with. The LSC began providing study partner matching in the Fall of 2020, to ensure that students studying under pandemic conditions had the opportunity to connect with each other and benefit from peer-to-peer learning. Although we have moved on from pandemic learning conditions, LSC's study partner matching continues to be a popular way for students to find peers in their courses to study with.

A universal Canvas announcement during the first few weeks of class, starting in the Fall of 2024, has increased the reach of the program tremendously.

From Tutors to Teachers

LSC hires about 100 tutors each year. Our tutors are an exceptional group of students dedicated to fostering growth and learning in their peers, and they continue to make important contributions after they graduate. Some from this year's cohort of graduating tutors will work in industry, labs, hospitals, and NASA, as well as attend dental, graduate, law, medical, and nursing schools at institutions including Cal Tech, Columbia, Cornell, Lehigh, Princeton, University of California, University of Pennsylvania, University of Wisconsin, and Yale.

This year, we are proud to spotlight three tutors who will be going directly from Cornell into teaching jobs!

“Working for the LSC has truly been one of the most rewarding experiences of college, and I don't think I would be on this path without it.

What tutoring did you do at the LSC?

Daniel: I have worked in a variety of roles in the LSC including as a math tutor, physics tutor, PSSP course assistant, and peer study skills tutor.

Kendahl: As an American Sign Language (ASL) tutor, I helped students strengthen their signing skills and build confidence. As a Teaching Assistant for HE 1112, I supported students' academic success strategies.

Matthew: I was the LSC Japanese tutor for two semesters. I met with students to help strengthen their skills in grammar, listening, and speaking.

Where will you be teaching in the Fall?

Daniel: I will be teaching high school physics at The Williams School in New London, CT.

Kendahl: As a Teaching Fellow, I will be teaching 6th grade Language Arts in Charleston, SC.

Matthew: Through Teach for America, I will be working with preschoolers in Denver, CO.



from left: Kendahl Wesley CAS '25, Matthew McCormack CAS '25, and Daniel Kaplan CAS '25

Tell us about your path to becoming a teacher?

Daniel: My high school physics teacher inspired my love for physics. But when I got to college, many of my peers who weren't studying physics mentioned that they didn't like physics because of their experience in high school. As a teacher, I hope to help students learn to love physics, while also fostering an environment of curiosity and exploration in the classroom.

Kendahl: My path has been guided by a passion for learning and a deep appreciation for the transformative power of education. While my long-term goal is to teach at the college level, I wanted to gain experience working with younger students. Understanding the classroom dynamics will make me a stronger, more empathetic educator. In this role, I hope to develop effective teaching strategies, learn how to foster inclusive and engaging classrooms, and build meaningful connections with students. I hope to create a supportive learning environment where all students feel seen, valued, and empowered to succeed.

Matthew: My background is in language education, but I feel that language education and early childhood education are very similar in terms of comprehension. I have always loved teaching and worked with young kids in the past at a Japanese preschool in my hometown. I hope to feel accomplishment from seeing these kids progress through the early stages of life, and to contribute a guiding hand and sense of curiosity that is so important at that age.

Spotlight: Jim Baker

Senior Lecturer, LSC and Department of Physics

In his supplemental courses for introductory physics, Jim sees that students sometimes get so caught up in the details of physics that they struggle with big picture questions. So, Jim's classes start with a discussion: What is the meaning of the topic we're studying? How does it relate to previous topics? Under what conditions do we need to consider this topic? Why is the topic significant in physics? Students then go on to discuss conceptual questions and work on analytical exam-level problems.

Jim facilitates a failure-positive environment for learning so that his students feel comfortable engaging with challenging work. Within the caring classroom community Jim fosters, he encourages peer work to give students practice using the language of the field and communicating their ideas. Jim says, "Speaking to peers benefits learning because it broadens the neural networks that the brain is building. Reviewing ideas together improves recall and the ability to apply ideas to new situations in the future."

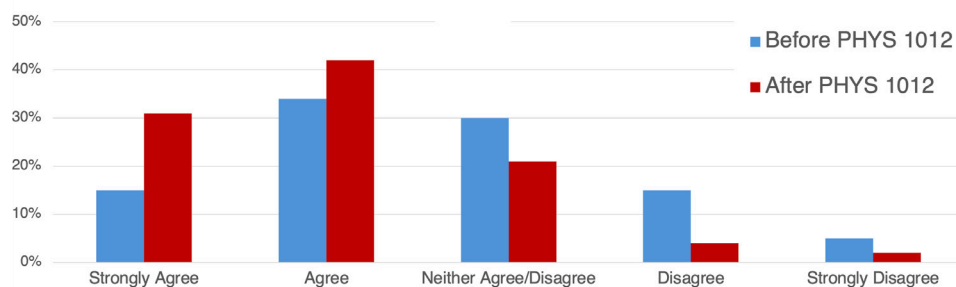


In addition to being a Senior Lecturer with the LSC, Jim holds a secondary appointment in the Department of Physics. He participates in department meetings and searches, and he serves on the Physics Department Community Committee which is tasked with ensuring that the Department is a welcoming environment for all. Jim is the Program Coordinator for the department's Undergraduate Learning Assistant (LA) program; he manages this experiential learning program where students gain teaching experience and training.

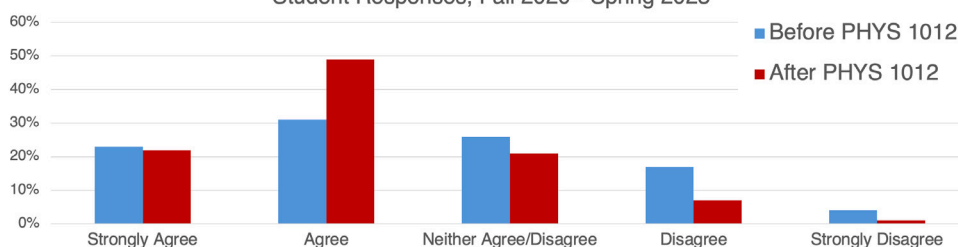
Jim is also the faculty advisor for the STEM Alliance, a student organization dedicated to ensuring all interested students find community and support in pursuing their chosen field of study.

Over the summer, Jim helps the newest Cornellians prepare for success by teaching a course in spatial visualization to the Engineering majors in the PSSP.

I feel like I belong in PHYS 1112
Student Responses, Fall 2020 - Spring 2023



I currently possess the study skills and strategies that I need to achieve my performance goals in PHYS 1112
Student Responses, Fall 2020 - Spring 2023

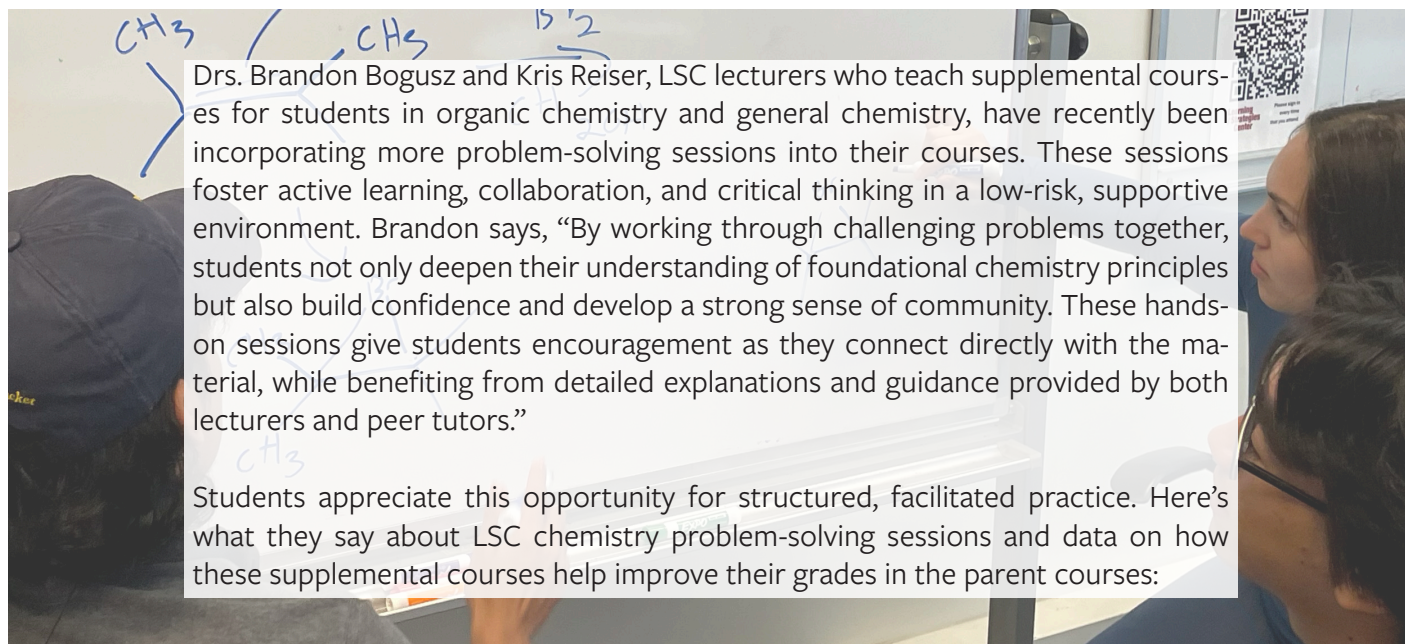


“ The best professor I have ever met in regards to offering constructive criticism, positive feedback, and being genuinely committed to students and their learning process.

“ [Working with Jim] gave me so much confidence. He truly wants to see everyone succeed.

“ This class helped improve my way of thinking in a way I never expected it to. These skills will be extremely valuable.

Chemistry Problem Solving



Drs. Brandon Bogusz and Kris Reiser, LSC lecturers who teach supplemental courses for students in organic chemistry and general chemistry, have recently been incorporating more problem-solving sessions into their courses. These sessions foster active learning, collaboration, and critical thinking in a low-risk, supportive environment. Brandon says, "By working through challenging problems together, students not only deepen their understanding of foundational chemistry principles but also build confidence and develop a strong sense of community. These hands-on sessions give students encouragement as they connect directly with the material, while benefiting from detailed explanations and guidance provided by both lecturers and peer tutors."

Students appreciate this opportunity for structured, facilitated practice. Here's what they say about LSC chemistry problem-solving sessions and data on how these supplemental courses help improve their grades in the parent courses:

“ I really feel like the tutors and Brandon care about my success.

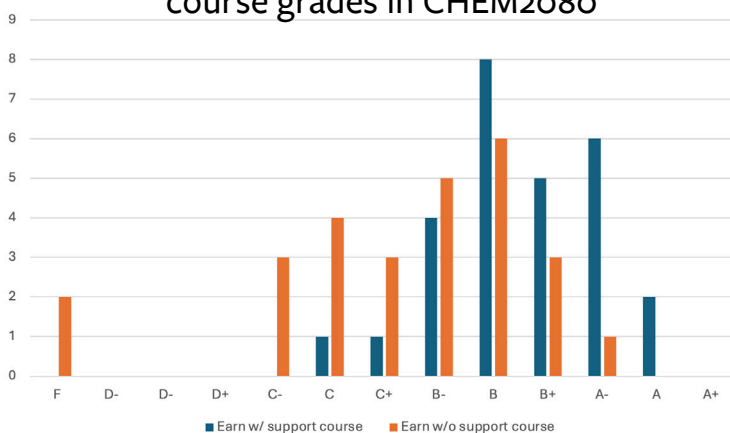
“ Kris is really great at explaining the content, and I can collaborate with other chem students.

“ [Problem-solving] is one of the most useful tools that I have access to, and I would totally recommend it.

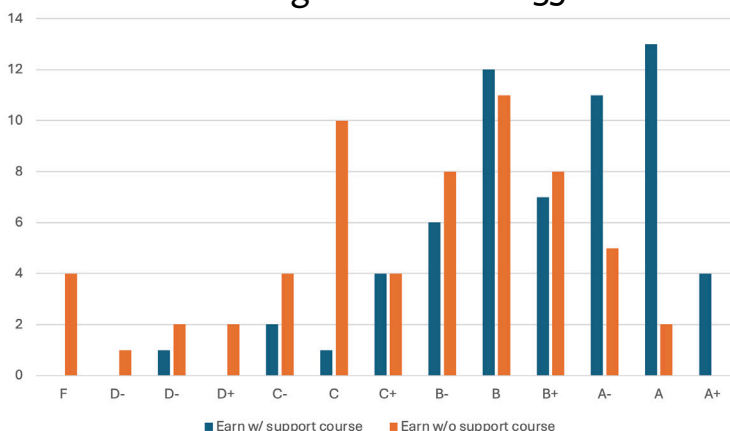
“ The single most helpful thing for me in terms of practicing and actually internalizing concepts for the exam.

“ The best way to learn organic chemistry is to get up on the board and do it. Problem solving has been immensely helpful in understanding organic chemistry concepts, to visualize reaction mechanisms, ask questions about tricky nuances, and learn by trial-and-error.

Students self report CHEM1008 improves their course grades in CHEM2080



Students self report CHEM1058 improves their course grades in CHEM3580



HE 1112: Academic Well-Being Seminar

The LSC developed and offered a new course starting in Fall 2024, HE 1112, that meets during the second half of the semester. It is designed as a mid-semester intervention for students, especially first-years, who need to make real-time changes to be successful. Advisor recommendation is required for enrollment. 30 students took the class this year. They were motivated to work hard and make changes to how they approached school, and students in the class experienced growth and positive outcomes. Through pre-post administration of the ARS-30 (Academic Resilience Scale) we saw that academic resilience increased after the 7-week class. Student growth was evidenced qualitatively by their reflections throughout the course and by their exploration and adoption of new strategies.

At the end of the semester, HE1112 students wrote letters to their future selves describing how they would incorporate what they learned into their future paths. This is an example:



Dear future me,

Hey! I hope you're reading this feeling proud of how far you've come. (Last semester) was a semester of real growth not just academically, but also in figuring out how to manage life better. Here's a reminder of all the ways you leveled up last semester and why you should keep these habits going.

First, you finally started sleeping like a human being. Remember when you committed to going to bed at 11 PM most nights? That made everything better. You were sharper in class, less stressed, and way more productive. Plus, let's be real you: actually felt good instead of just surviving on caffeine and adrenaline. Keep that up, brain, because if you want to keep crushing, it needs rest. Building second-order habits, like 20-minute daily reviewing and rewriting of notes felt particularly important for bio; it saves you from cramming around midnight before some colossally bad exam hangover. Having understood each and every lecture when it came surely made much difference, so thank you in the future you again around finals this year. Third, you finally figured out how to study smarter instead of harder. Quizlets? Genius move. You spend some time every week devoted to the review of biology, and the material finally starts sticking with you in ways that have come as such a relief going into the exams. This works for you-keep at it because it saves you panic. You also got way better at time management, balancing those history and bio demands. Remember how you planned ahead for your history paper, started early, and avoided the last-minute rush? That's the energy you need to keep. Planning ahead meant less stress and better work, win-win.

Last but not least, hard as life may get, you really tried to stick to your goals. Be it completing assignments in advance or reserving time for relaxation, you have proved to yourself from within that you can handle competitive priorities. It's all about keeping your head clear and your priorities straight. You started these habits because you wanted to enjoy college, not just survive it. You've got big goals. To learn, to grow, and to build the life you want and sticking to these habits will get you there. Keep it up. You've already proven you can do it.

Rooting for you always,
- Current You

Spotlight: Nickey Williams

Assistant Director: Pre-collegiate Summer Scholars Program

Since taking on the role of Assistant Director of the Pre-Collegiate Summer Scholars Program in November 2023, Nickey Williams has focused on extending the impact of the program beyond the summer. Her goal is to create a strong foundation for student success and community that continues throughout the academic year.

Nickey has developed systems that promote sustained engagement and academic follow-up, and she has built opportunity for increased collaboration with campus partners. Nickey says, “One of the most rewarding parts of this work has been hiring and men-

toring student staff during the summer and academic year. These student assistants help foster a stronger sense of belonging by planning events, producing a monthly newsletter, and serving as peer leaders and connectors for their fellow scholars.”



Nickey is grounded by the belief that “advocacy is about walking alongside students as they grow into the best versions of themselves.” She strives to make a difference in students’ lives not just by offering support, but by building spaces where they feel seen, valued, and capable of thriving at Cornell and beyond.

Nickey has launched several initiatives that have helped solidify PSSP as a year-round community of care.

Some of her key initiatives include:

- Monthly newsletters and weekly “Chatter” messages to keep students informed and engaged
- Cohort gatherings, including a start-of-semester meeting, a holiday social, and informal hot cocoa meet-ups attended by 75 students
- 46 individual academic support check-ins during the 2024-2025 academic year
- Regular meetings with college and OADI advisors to track student progress and needs.




PSSP 2024 students enjoy a Saturday at the Ithaca Farmers' Market

Online Learning Resources

To complement our robust in-person services, the LSC continues to build engaging online offerings. Our YouTube channel and website are highly-utilized resources for learners at Cornell and across the world. In the past year, our website had over 650,000 page views, with the highest utilization occurring around the start of the Fall and Spring semesters.

To date, our YouTube videos have had over 1.5 million views! Our most popular videos are our two resources on Cornell Notes, but our recent video on Digital Materials that we produced in collaboration with the Center for Teaching Innovation has also been increasing in popularity.



Follow the QR code to watch our video about learning from digital materials

LSC Canvas Modules

LSC continues to develop self-paced online modules for students who would like to review course content. These modules are helpful for students whose background in subjects such as calculus or chemistry is not robust, those who drop a class and want to review the material before they take the class again, and for any student who just wants to learn more before classes start. In addition, our study skills modules help students master skills such as note-taking, test preparation, time management, as well as broader skills such as reflecting on the past semester, and making a successful transition to Cornell. Our modules include:

- Organic Chemistry I
- General Chemistry I
- General Chemistry II
- Calculus I
- Calculus II
- Making a Successful Transition to Cornell
- Gearing Up for a New Semester at Cornell
- Managing Your Time and Space
- Identifying Your Best Note-Taking System
- Preparing for and Taking Exams

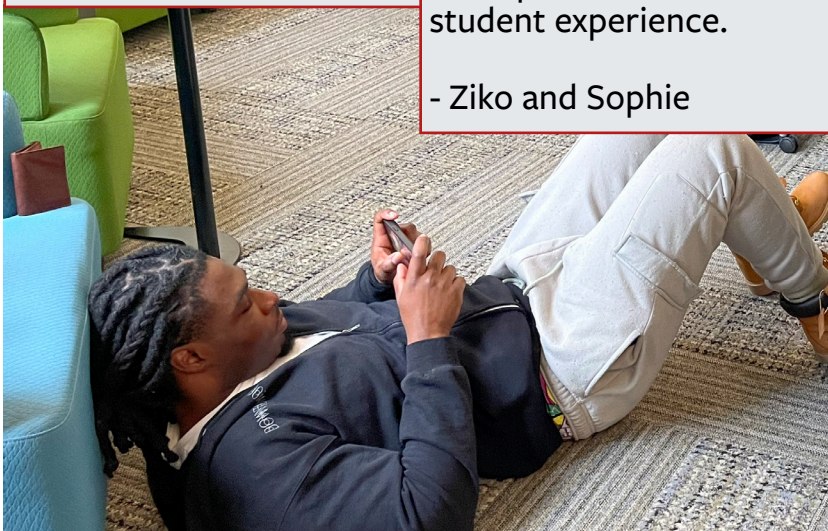
Students Practice their Presentations with Rosa: LSC's Public Speaking Tutor

“ I practiced public speaking with Rosa this semester and it was extremely helpful! I am someone who cannot easily speak in front of a class, and I often even have trouble speaking in smaller group discussions. Even asking questions in front of a large class, something I hadn't really done before my junior spring semester of college, makes my heart race. This semester, I had to present to a group of around 50 students, and I was pretty frightened. I love the class and knew I wanted to do really well on the presentation, so I signed up for a practice session with Rosa. When I got there, Jen showed me around and then left me with Rosa in the LSC room while she was in another room in the suite. I practiced with Rosa for 30 minutes and then presented later that day. Afterwards, for the first time ever, I felt very confident in how I presented! I even got compliments from classmates and my professor that I spoke very clearly and presented the information very well. I would recommend a public speaking session with Rosa to anyone who is even a little nervous about their upcoming presentation.

- Daria B.

“ Rosa is a foundational part of the Cornell student experience.

- Ziko and Sophie



Peer-Led Study Skills Workshops

During the '24-'25 academic year, peer tutors from the LSC led 26 study skills workshops, which were attended by 704 students. With the help of new partnerships, this academic year more students attended our workshops than in the previous two years combined. These workshops help introduce the LSC to students across campus and they also provide our tutors with an opportunity to expand their teaching experience by leading larger groups.

This year, we held interactive workshops in classes across Cornell, in partnership with various student organizations, in residence halls, and with groups of peer mentors. Many of our workshops were held through partnerships with the College of Arts and Sciences and The Tatkon Center for New Students. We offer five different topics for workshops—and while tutors work from standard lesson plans, they each bring their own styles and experiences to the events they lead.

2024-2025 Workshops

Start Strong: These workshops help students get the most out of their syllabi and map out the semester to identify upcoming crunch times.

Study Smarter: During these sessions, tutors introduce some evidence-backed strategies that help students get the most out of their study sessions.

Time Management: Here, tutors help students figure out how to make the most of their time—including methods for studying efficiently and balancing commitments.

Prelim Prep: In these workshops, tutors present effective methods for prelim-prep and help students plan for their upcoming exams.

Finish Strong: When finals are fast-approaching, tutors discuss some techniques for studying and managing time that are relevant for the end of the term.



Language Tutoring

LSC continues to bolster our offerings for undergraduates enrolled in language-learning classes. This year the LSC offered tutoring in eight of the most popular languages for Cornell undergraduates: ASL, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, and Spanish. In order to meet students where they are, we offer a combination of in-person and online tutoring. In addition to their regular shifts, language tutors make language class visits, letting students know about tutoring and even offering students some in-class support. This year, students enrolled in introductory Japanese courses benefitted from the expertise of an LSC tutor, who came to their classes to listen to their group presentations and offer them feedback on their dialogues. These positive learning experiences, with tutors serving as course assistants, can encourage students to stop by our tutoring hours for additional help.

LSC Scholarship

LSC scholarships help Cornell students achieve timely graduation by covering the cost of tuition for Winter and Summer Session courses. Designated advisors in each of Cornell's undergraduate colleges nominate students who have both academic and financial need. These advisors work with students to select the specific Summer or Winter courses they need to meet their academic goals and fulfill graduation requirements. LSC funds students' participation in a broad range of Cornell classes, including courses in American Sign Language, Biology, Calculus, Classics, Government, Psychology, and Statistics. In the Summer of 2024 and Winter of 2025, 287 students from across Cornell's undergraduate colleges received scholarship funding. Below is some of the feedback from recent scholarship recipients:

“ As a first-gen, low-income student, I felt I was drowning and would not be able to graduate. This scholarship gave me hope and reminded me that I do belong at Cornell.

“ I would be in a very different place looking towards graduation in the spring had I not been able to take advantage of this opportunity.

“ This scholarship not only helped me continue my college career, but it also provided opportunities for me to build connections with professors and students in the courses while also getting needed credits for my graduation this spring.

“ The LSC Scholarship made it possible for me to graduate on time while lifting any financial burdens taking a Winter Course would have caused, and I am very grateful to have been a recipient of it!

“ It allowed me to finish a med school prerequisite and catch up on credits. The LSC Scholarship is the reason I will be graduating on time!

“ The scholarship helped me get on track to graduation and also the class I took was very engaging.

“ I'm deeply grateful for this scholarship. It eased my financial burden, kept me on track for graduation, and gave me the flexibility to focus on my senior-year goals. Thank you for believing in my future!

