

TUTORING AT LOS MEDANOS COLLEGE



A STUDY ON STUDENT EXPERIENCES

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

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Prepared
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Background

In response to LMC's Ad Hoc Tutoring Committee, this study was conducted in the Fall of 1995 in order to understand student general experiences with LMC's tutoring services during the semester. This study is exploratory in nature and DOES NOT evaluate the present tutoring model of the college. It is expected that the results would be employed in improving the tutoring services of the college.

General Method

A survey research was the general method employed. A survey was constructed to assess student awareness, usage, experiences with tutors, self-perceived impact, and overall satisfaction with the tutoring experience during the Fall of 1995 at LMC (Appendix A). A research working committee was formed to assist the Office of Institutional Research in developing the survey. Members of the committee included Barbara Austin, Joan Cookman, and Jeanine Stein.

Sample: Three hundred and fifty surveys were sent out to 20 classes at LMC in the Fall of 1995. The classes were randomly selected stratified by academic area and time of day. Of the 350 surveys sent out, 281 were completed and returned -- an 80% response rate. The sample of respondents directionally reflects the Fall 1995 student population of the college. The sample had a higher proportion of Asian and younger students (Table 1). Nevertheless, the results provide us with great insights in understanding student experiences with LMC tutoring.

Table 1
Demographics Comparison of Sample and LMC Fall 1995 Student Population

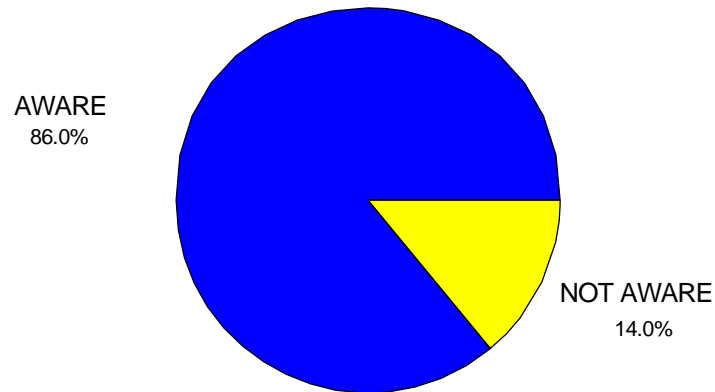
	Sample	F95 LMC
	N=281	Std. Pop.
		N=7,311
<i>Ethnicity</i>		
American Indian	1%	1%
African American	7%	10%
Latino	16%	18%
Asian	19%	10%
Caucasian	50%	56%
No Response	7%	5%
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	39%	39%
Female	60%	61%
Unknown	1%	-----
<i>Age Group</i>		
19 & Younger	42%	24%
20-25	32%	28%
26-30	6%	10%
31-35	6%	11%
36-40	4%	11%
Over 40	6%	16%
No Response	4%	0%

Statistical Analysis: All data were coded and analyzed through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequencies and Chi Square Analysis were the primary statistical tests employed.

RESULTS

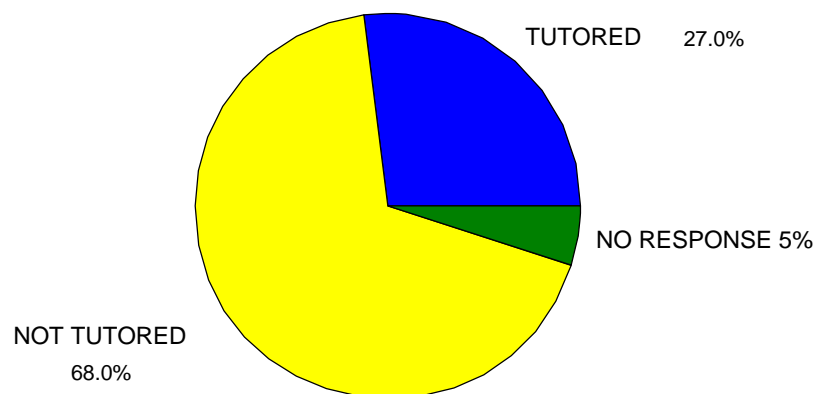
The majority of students (86%) are aware that tutoring is available free of charge (Figure 1).

Figure 1
Percentage of Students who are Aware of LMC Tutoring Services
(N=281)



Of the 281 students, 27% have used tutoring at LMC in the Fall of 1995 and 68% have not (Figure 2).

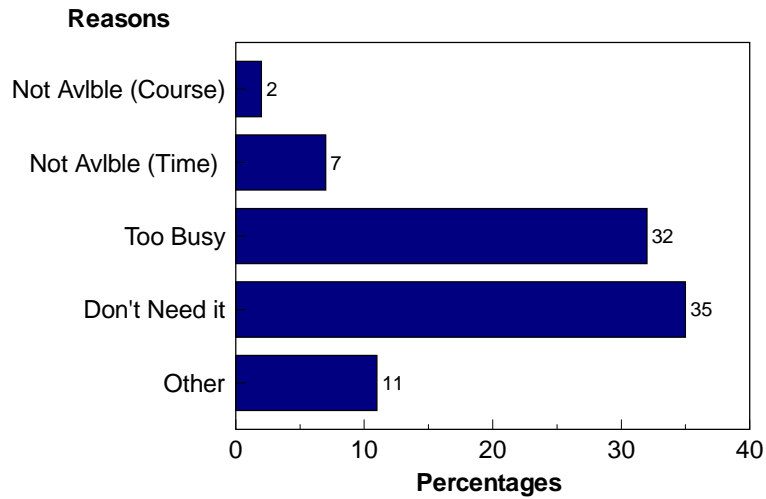
Figure 2
Percentage of Students Who Have and Have Not Been Tutored at LMC



REASONS STUDENTS DON'T USE TUTORING

The two most common reasons students gave for not using tutoring are “I don't need tutoring” and “I am too busy”.

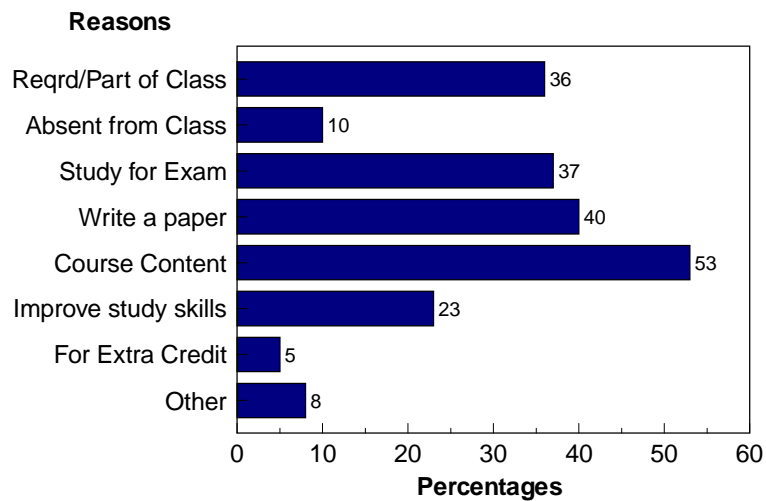
Figure 3
Reasons Students Don't Use Tutoring
(N=190)



REASONS STUDENTS USE TUTORING

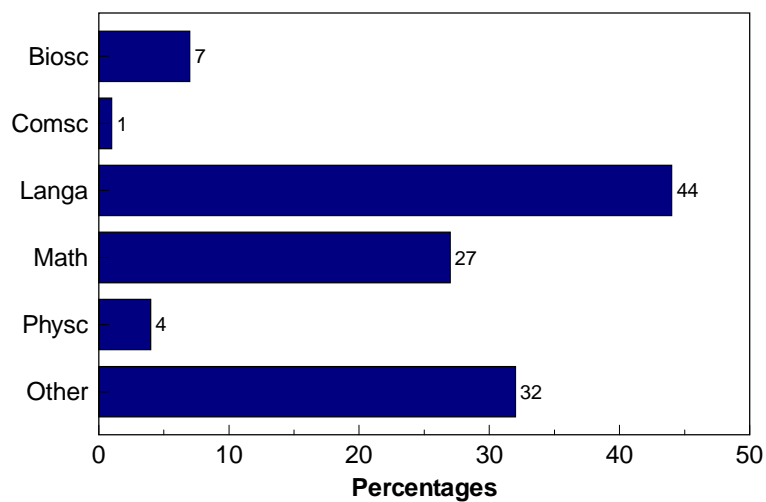
The three most common reasons for using tutoring are to understand course content, to write a paper, and to study for an exam (Figure 4).

Figure 4
Reasons Students Use Tutoring
(N=75)



Language Arts and Math were the two subjects that students seek tutoring most (Figure 5).

Figure 5
Class Distribution in Tutoring



Latino and Female students are more likely to use tutoring (Table 2).

Table 2

Demographic Comparison of Students Tutored and Not Tutored: Percentages

	Tutored N=75	Not Tutored N=190
<i>Ethnicity</i>		
American Indian	0	2%
African American	5%	5%
Latino	24%	13%
Asian	12%	23%
Caucasian	40%	54%
Other	13%	8%
No Response	5%	8%
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	35%	36%
Female	64%	59%
Unknown	1%	5%
<i>Age Group</i>		
19 & Younger	40%	42%
20-25	35%	32%
26-30	8%	6%
31-35	9%	5%
36-40	1%	4%
Over 40	5%	6%
No Response	1%	5%

STUDENT EXPERIENCES WITH TUTORING

Overall, students expressed very favorable responses towards their tutors (Table 3). Over 75% of the students who received tutoring agreed that their tutors “are patient”, “explained the material clearly”, “are knowledgeable about the subject”, “answer their questions”, “remained focused during the tutoring session”, and “arrived on time”

Table 3
Students Experiences with the Tutors: Level of Agreement.

MOST TUTORS ASSIGNED	STRONGLY AGREE	MODERATELY AGREE	NEUTRAL/ NO OPINION	MODERATELY DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Are patient	47%	40%	11%	1%	1%
Explain the material clearly	29%	51%	13%	1%	3%
Show me different approaches to studying	28%	29%	25%	9%	4%
Are knowledgeable about the subject	47%	32%	13%	3%	1%
Recommend readings or other references	15%	20%	12%	7%	7%
Make the course material meaningful	21%	27%	35%	7%	3%
Answer my questions	52%	33%	9%	1%	1%
Remain focused on tutoring the subject	44%	43%	8%	-	1%
Contribute significantly to my knowledge	29%	43%	20%	3%	1%
Are enthusiastic about tutoring	32%	33%	24%	4%	1%
Use different ways to explain the material	31%	41%	16%	7%	1%
Arrive on time	52%	28%	12%	3%	1%
Provide academic encouragement	36%	25%	28%	5%	3%
Show me ways to learn more effectively	28%	31%	25%	12%	1%
Encourage me to be self-reliant with course-related work	25%	28%	33%	5%	3%

STUDENT RATINGS OF VARIOUS ASPECTS OF TUTORING

Most students rated the various aspects of tutoring average of above average (Table 4). 35% of the students rated the “tutors’ knowledge in the subject” to be excellent. Less than 10% of the students rated any aspect of tutoring below average.

Table 4
Students ratings of some aspects of LMC’ tutoring.

	EXCELLENT	ABOVE AVERAGE	AVERAGE	BELOW AVERAGE
Space for tutoring	20%	29%	37%	9%
Overall quality of tutoring	21%	49%	21%	3%
The hours of service	27%	35%	28%	7%
Ease of making an appointment	20%	43%	27%	3%
Training students how to study	15%	29%	44%	7%
Tutor’s knowledge in subject	35%	35%	23%	3%

SELF-PERCEIVED TUTORING IMPACT

Concerning self-perceived tutoring impact in several areas of student development, less than 25% of the students expressed that tutoring VERY MUCH contributed to their development in such areas. Most students expressed responses in the SLIGHTLY to MODERATELY levels of impact in all areas assessed (Table 5).

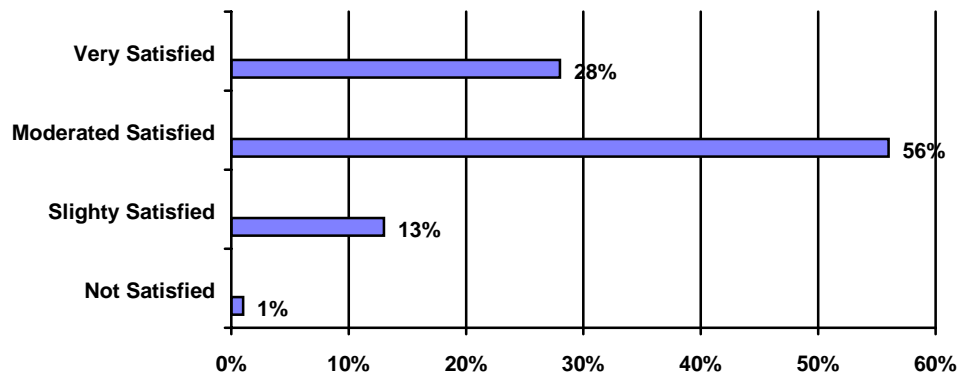
Table 5
Students Self-Perceived Tutoring Impact in Several Academic Areas.

TUTORING CONTRIBUTES TO MY	EXTENT OF IMPROVEMENT			
	NOT AT ALL	SLIGHTLY	MODERATELY	VERY MUCH
Studying more effectively	7%	35%	35%	20%
Reading text books more effectively	9%	31%	43%	9%
Taking meaningful notes in class	13%	25%	35%	19%
Concentrating in classes	17%	25%	33%	16%
Asking questions in class	19%	31%	28%	15%
Preparing for exams	7%	16%	44%	25%
Writing term papers	12%	20%	43%	17%
Managing study time	15%	32%	31%	15%
Understanding the course material	7%	13%	47%	27%
Improving my self confidence	15%	20%	39%	20%
Becoming self-reliant in approaching class work	11%	21%	40%	21%

Overall Satisfaction

Of the students who received tutoring, 82% were moderately to VERY satisfied with the tutoring they received (Figure 5).

Figure 5
Level of Satisfaction with Tutoring



Preferred Type of Tutoring

Fifty percent of the students indicated they prefer individual tutoring, and 42% prefer both -- group and individual tutoring (Figure 6).

Figure 6
Preferred Type of Tutoring

