

Abstract Submitted
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The Physics Learning Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison S.M. NOSSAL, L.E. WATSON, E. HOOPER, A. HUESMANN, B. SCHENKER, P. TIMBIE, M. RZCHOWSKI, Physics Department, University of Wisconsin-Madison — The Physics Learning Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison provides academic support and small-group supplemental instruction to students studying introductory algebra-based and calculus-based physics. These classes are gateway courses for majors in the biological and physical sciences, pre-health fields, engineering, and secondary science education. The Physics Learning Center offers supplemental instruction groups twice weekly where students can discuss concepts and practice with problem-solving techniques. The Center also provides students with access on-line resources that stress conceptual understanding, and to exam review sessions. Participants in our program include returning adults, people from historically underrepresented racial/ethnic groups, students from families in lower-income circumstances, students in the first generation of their family to attend college, transfer students, veterans, and people with disabilities, all of whom might feel isolated in their large introductory course and thus have a more difficult time finding study partners. We also work with students potentially at-risk for having academic difficulty (due to factors academic probation, weak math background, low first exam score, or no high school physics). A second mission of the Physics Learning Center is to provide teacher training and leadership experience for undergraduate Peer Mentor Tutors. These Peer Tutors lead the majority of the weekly group sessions in close supervision by PLC staff members. We will describe our work to support students in the Physics Learning Center, including our teacher-training program for our undergraduate Peer Mentor Tutors

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