

Student Success Centre (SSC) *Assimilation and Transformation*

1. Background

In November 2019, Ajman University (AU) announced the formation of the Student Success Center (SSC) to serve all the students enrolled in the University.

2. Purpose of the SSC

The SSC will offer a variety of student-centered services to ensure academic excellence. From free tutoring, individualized academic coaching to tailored workshops, the Center will provide the tools and resources necessary to achieve its mission. The SSC has a mandate that goes beyond employment training and deep into producing competent, confident, and capable professionals who will contribute in developing their society.

3. Mission of the SSC

The SSC will help students reach their full academic potential and thrive during their University years through early identification of students at need for academic support and through providing comprehensive support tailored to the needs of the student to help develop capable and well-rounded graduates who will enter the work force and help foster a forward thinking and progressive society.

4. Specific Objectives of the SSC

With close liaison with college Deans, faculty, managers and students at AU, the SSC will:

1. Help students reach their full academic potential
2. Increase students' knowledge and application of behaviors and habits that lead to academic success
3. Create and cultivate a culture of Life-Long Learning within students

5. Overall Strategy of the SSC

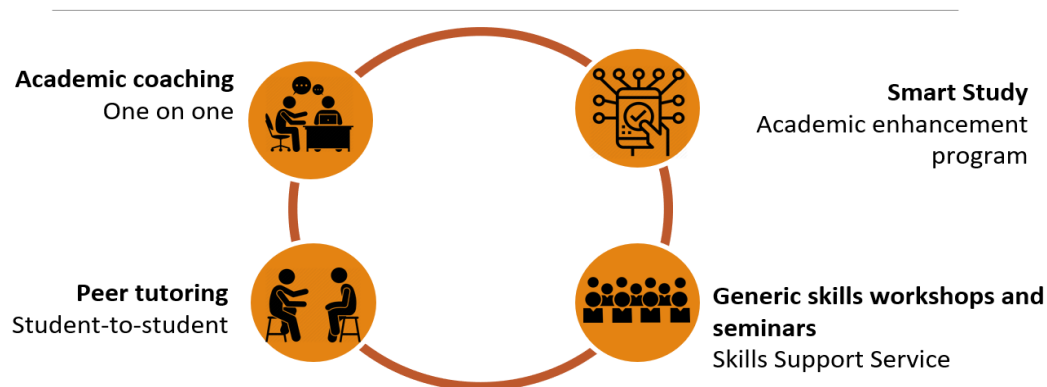
5.1 The SSC will endeavor to provide equitable education and support opportunities to all the students who need its support. All activities and sessions provided by the SSC will be student-centered and student-tailored to the need expressed by students through surveys, or observed by faculty members who will be invited to propose workshops, seminars and similar interventions. The activities will be delivered in a professional and flexible environment that utilize the facilities available at AU.

5.2 The SSC will work with all stakeholders in AU (faculty members, academic advisors, deans) to identify students who are in need for academic support, mentoring, or guidance. The students will also be given access to self-refer, using user-friendly applications to register in the SSC and reserve a one-to-one 'coaching' session with a peer or faculty member. The SSC stresses that early identification of students at risk of academic mishaps is key to successful support.

5.3 The SSC will invite select individuals representing academia, industry, government, and employers to act as an Advisory Committee to the Center. The Advisory Committee shall have a written Terms of Reference outlining its role, meeting frequencies, and other relevant aspects.

6. Support provided by the SSC

The SSC will provide a range of personalized student-tailored services as shown in Figure 1.



7. Procedure

7.1 The SSC will coordinate with all Colleges at AU to ensure that their Deans are all on board with the Center and its purpose.

7.2 Each Dean shall nominate ONE faculty member to be the assigned SSC Faculty Liaison (SSC-FL).

7.3 The SSC-FL in each college will promote the SSC among the students of their respective colleges in addition to identifying students at academic risks, those who received several warnings, and similar cases of students who were observed to be in need for academic or skill training support.

Students at risk could also be identified through coordinating with AU's Registrar's office who keeps student records and current information about warnings students received.

7.4 The SSC-FL will advise these students to register their interest with the SSC, noting that the support provided by the SSC is voluntary, confidential, and with the full autonomy of the student concerned.

7.5 There will be TWO types of services provided by the SSC for students:

- a) **Peer Tutoring:** Where a number of students with outstanding academic records are identified by the colleges and (after having their consent) their names and other details are provided to the SSC. These students will form a pool of peer-tutors to provide 1 to 1 tutoring to students.
- b) **Skills workshops, seminars, tutorials:** These sessions will be provided by the SSC based on needs assessments and they predominantly are designed for groups of students who do NOT

7.6 Students eligible to be recruited as Peer Tutors (PTs) will be nominated by the SSC-FL in each college at AU using an online Peer Tutor Nomination Form (online)

7.6.1 The following are some credentials for consideration of candidate PTs:

For a student to be eligible to enroll as Peer Tutor, the following will be required:

- (a) The student must be nominated by the respective SSC-FL
- (b) The student must have an A grade in the course(s) that s/he will be tutoring **with the EXCEPTION** of final year student tutors who will be nominated by the respective SSC-FL based on knowledge of the candidate PT's academic performance
- (c) The student must have no history of academic warnings
- (d) The student must have not committed any academic misconduct

A short bio of each candidate shall be included with the as reference.

7.6.2 Data required to be collected by the SSC/IT about each PT (the data will allow students needing tutors to select their preferred tutor):

- i. Name and ID
- ii. Gender
- iii. College/Program of the PT
- iv. Topic/courses which the PT has identified as areas of interest/expertise
- v. The Grade in the preferred topic(s) of the tutor
- vi. Times and dates available for tutoring (minimum of 1-hour slots)

7.6.3 Data required to be filled by the student tutees needing support:

- i. Name and ID
- ii. Gender
- iii. College/Program in which the student was registered
- iv. Tutor identified/selected
- v. Date and time for the tutorial
- vi. Open-ended comment box for any relevant or additional requirements by the student

7.6.4 Rules and roles concerning the Peer Tutorials:

- a) *The PT will be required to work collaboratively with the course instructor/professor of the subject that will be covered in the tutorial session to identify ways to provide tutoring support that will empower the tutee to engage in effective study strategies and will promote understanding of the material*
- b) The tutorials will adhere AU's gender segregation policy (i.e. Male PTs will conduct tutorials with male tutees, and female PTs with female tutees)
- c) The PT-tutee relationship is a professional working relationship, and no comments apart from those filled in the Tutorial Goals and Outcomes form will be communicated or shared with outside parties.
- d) Both tutors and tutees are expected to be prompt, courteous and respectful
- e) A friendly and comfortable rapport can make the learning experience more effective, but socializing should be kept to a minimum during tutoring sessions
- f) Both PTs and tutees are expected to be engaged and working toward a common goal for each session
- g) The PT and tutee should collaborate to establish this goal at the beginning of each session, and the session goals should be documented in the Peer Tutorial Goals and Outcome Form
- h) It is expected that PTs provide no more than two hours of tutoring to the same student per course each week (i.e. a student tutee cannot receive more than 2 hours of tutoring in this program per week for any one given course). Any additional weekly tutoring hours require the approval of the Manager of the SSC
- i) All tutorials will be conducted online using one of the available platforms (Zoom, MS Team, etc)
- j) The tutor sessions will be held for a minimum of 1 to a maximum of two-hour session or could be broken up into multiple sessions, as long as the total time per week does not exceed two hours
- k) If a tutorial session must be cancelled, PTs and tutees should provide at least 24 hours' notice to each other
- l) PTs are instructed to wait only 15 minutes when tutees fail to show up for a scheduled session; tutees should do the same
- m) PTs are expected to help tutees understand subjects and assignments that tutees struggle with, but they should not work together on completing assignments that will be handed in (and they cannot edit assignments/papers for the students).
- n) Confirming the attendance of the session should be at the end of the session, where the PT should ask the student to confirm it on the system before ending the session
- o) After each peer tutorial, the student(s) receiving the tutorial will be required to complete a short anonymous satisfaction survey to evaluate the tutorial session.

8. Students who Commit Academic Integrity Violations- 6.10

In line with its Mission of "helping students reach their full academic potential", the Student Success Center (SSC) plays pivotal role in prevention potential academic integrity violations (that include cheating in examinations and committing plagiarism), and also prevention of the re-occurrence or repetition of such incidents.

The SSC will conduct at least one (but probably several) activities in each academic semester on professionalism, ethics, and/or academic misconduct. These activities will be developed in a way that it awakens in the students their anticipated standing as ethical individuals whose contribution in building health societies are of paramount importance. They will also equip the students with the knowledge and attitude becoming of a University student.

In cases of incidents of actual plagiarizing or cheating in examinations, and in addition to all the disciplinary actions and counseling sessions received, the student will be 'required' to take and pass a short course developed by the SSC on ethics, academic misconduct, and good standing.

9. Fees

The peer-to-peer service is provided free of charge to eligible students at AU.

10. Additional Policies:

To the maximum extent permitted by its role to provide comprehensive learning support, the SSC does not warrant a positive outcome and disclaims all liability to students that have not improved their academic performance, even after receiving the tutorial(s).

For questions or concerns please send an email to: peertutor@ajan.ac.ae