



Student Support Services (SSS) Annual Report

2010–11 Project Year

LUTHER
COLLEGE

SSS Purposes

The Luther College Student Support Services (SSS) Program has five purposes driving every service and activity:

1. to promote student engagement and institutional commitment through meaningful connections and experiences;
2. to support and encourage students' academic progress and strong academic performance;
3. to help students gain financial knowledge and resources on their way to becoming financially independent and secure;
4. to help students gain the 4 P's (personal awareness and responsibility, a motivating purpose, a plan of attack, and perseverance) in order to find their place in the world;
5. to help students develop and exercise leadership.

(To request a copy of the service/purpose matrix, contact the SSS Office.)



Student Support Services

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TRiO
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Luther College students participating in Student Support Services (SSS) are among approximately 850,000 students across the country from sixth graders to Ph.D. candidates benefitting from a pipeline of opportunity programs known as TRIO. Besides SSS, TRIO programs include Upward Bound, Talent Search, McNair, and Educational Opportunity Centers. TRIO programs are designed to support income-eligible and first-generation students in their pursuit of a college degree which strengthens our workforce, economy and global competitiveness.



The SSS team (left to right):
Cheryl Wieseler, advisor and instructor
Tammy Hove, director
Chivonne Marlow, advisor and tutoring/
mentoring coordinator
Jennifer Folstad, administrative assistant

From the Director

The 2010–11 academic year was a year of new beginnings for the Luther College Student Support Services (SSS) Program. First and foremost, we secured a federal grant totaling \$1.5 million to fund the program over the next five years. (We have been continually funded by the U.S. Department of Education since 1973 and compete nationally every five years for grant funding.) This meant we could continue to provide a comprehensive support system for the Luther students SSS is designed to serve: first-generation college students from families with financial need.

SSS students are Luther's student athletes, musicians, resident assistants, student senators, committee organizers, and more. By year's end, nearly every SSS student remained in good academic standing (97 percent), was retained (93 percent), and was satisfied with the assistance they had received through the SSS program (99 percent).

That assistance included several new initiatives which contributed to their academic and personal success. The SSS Student Leadership Council, book lending library, and expanded technology lending program are good examples. In addition, we made great headway in our efforts to increase students' financial literacy through a combination of workshops, fun competitions, and a new online course. We promoted global consciousness by sponsoring students' participation in the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Forum and organizing a study-abroad "how-to" workshop with the Financial Aid and Study Abroad offices. Our efforts to assist students pursuing education beyond a bachelor's degree gained momentum, as we took students to a Graduate School Conference and supported a student-led GRE study group.

These new initiatives joined the standard, reliable services our students have come to expect: peer tutoring, a college success course for first-year students known as GS110, networking events, complimentary study aids, SSS grants, and, of course, advising. The foundation of our program rests on the ongoing individual advising that students receive from SSS staff. We are their guides, mentors, life-skills coaches, and cheerleaders! During 2010–11, we conducted over 800 personal meetings with our students.

On the administrative end of things, we noted other new beginnings. We replaced two long-term employees (lost to retirement and promotion) while maintaining our staff quality by inviting two experienced, caring professionals to join our team. In addition, we successfully transitioned to the Care Network for record keeping and reporting purposes, and we recognized students through several new awards during the annual SSS Celebration Banquet.

Finally, we bid farewell to 28 SSS students graduating from Luther College during 2010–11. Representing 23 different majors, the Luther College SSS Class of 2011 embarked on new careers, joined AmeriCorps or the Peace Corps, and entered graduate school. While graduation time evokes mixed emotions among SSS staff, it signifies the ultimate goal of Student Support Services—new beginnings for our students.



Tammy Hove
Director of Student Support Services
Luther College

SSS Participants

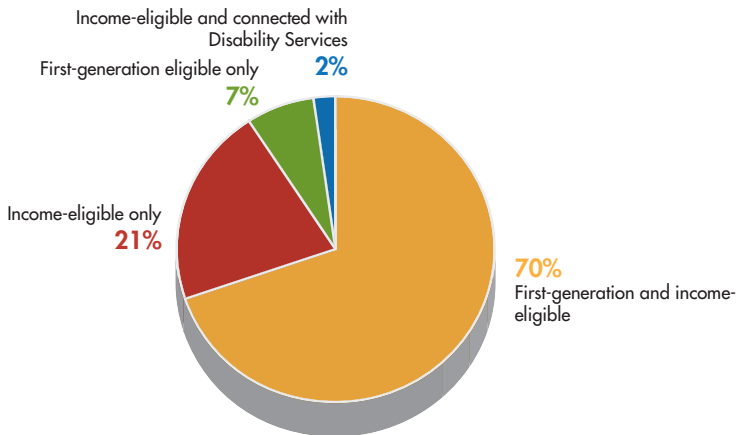
SSS served 161 students during the year:

- 58 first-year Luther students were invited to join the program in Fall 2010— 54 students became participants
- 96% are from Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, or Wisconsin
- 60% female, 40% male

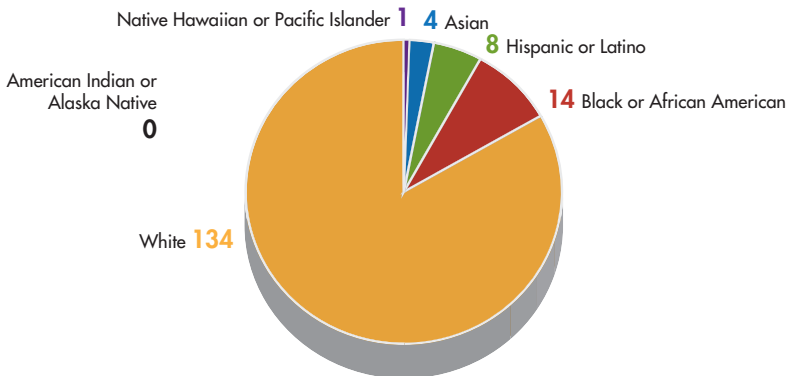
Federal Eligibility and Ethnicity

Students must qualify for participation in SSS, and eligible students entering the college are invited to apply. As mandated by Congress, two-thirds of the students served must come from families with incomes at 150 percent or less of the federal poverty level and in which neither parent has a bachelor's degree. (First-generation college students compose over 20 percent of Luther's student body.)

Federal Eligibility



Ethnicity (161 students)



"I am so glad to be a part of this program! I appreciate all the help I have received from SSS!"

Academic Achievement

- Average GPA of all SSS students exceeded 3.0
- 33 students (20%) earned a cumulative GPA \geq 3.5
- 83 students (52%) earned a cumulative GPA \geq 3.0
- 135 students (84%) earned a cumulative GPA \geq 2.5
- 52 students (32%) made the Dean's List during the year
- 156 students (97%) completed the year in good academic standing

Persistence and Graduation	Number	Percentage
Participants completing the academic year	159/161	98.75%
Participants persisting (Fall to Fall or graduating)	150/161	93%
First-year student retention (Fall to Fall)	49/54	91%
Graduation candidates completing requirements	28/31	90%

Student Satisfaction

- 100% said the SSS Office environment is friendly and welcoming.
- 99% believe the SSS staff is committed to their success and cares about them as individuals.
- 99% are satisfied with the assistance they have received through the SSS program.
- 99% would recommend the SSS program to other eligible students.
- 96% have been encouraged and challenged by SSS staff to do their best in college.
- 94% said SSS services they received have contributed to their success.
- 80% said their SSS advisor is one of the main people they turn to with questions or problems.

(SSS Student Survey, May 2011, 83 respondents—52% response rate)

Program Services & Accomplishments

Tutoring Services

A total of 134 tutor matches were made during the year, totaling 79,411 minutes (1,324 hours) of tutoring.

Sixty-nine percent of first-year SSS participants (and 62 percent of first- and second-year participants) took advantage of tutoring.

Tutors enhanced their tutoring skills by participating in ongoing workshops during the year. Training topics included mental health first aid, relaxation techniques for finals, tutor dos and don'ts, SASC resources/Disability Services, and stress relievers for students.

During the fall semester, the subject clocking the most tutoring time was math with 25 percent of total tutoring hours. Chemistry was a close second with 22 percent. During the spring semester, biology tutoring represented 28 percent of the total tutoring time. Chemistry was right behind at 25 percent.

Advising

The foundation of the SSS Program rests on the ongoing individual advising that students receive from staff. Each SSS student meets routinely with his/her assigned SSS advisor (Cheryl, Chivonne, or Tammy). During 2010–11, SSS advisors conducted over 800 personal meetings with students (approximately five meetings per student), which translates to 28,480 minutes, or 475 hours, of contact.

Advising involves assessing students' individual needs (to determine the type and level of support they receive), establishing annual goals and strategies to reach those goals, and discussing progress. Monitoring progress also involves ongoing collaboration with professors and other offices to help ensure students are on track to graduate and take advantage of beneficial resources and opportunities available to them as Luther College students.

Financial Literacy Education

Sixty-five students learned about wise money-management practices during "The Magic of Saving" SSS workshop held November 3, 2010. The event took advantage of the expertise of Luther alumni and friends working in the financial services industry. Topics addressed were building credit, the dark side of debt, identity theft, account balancing, investing, and money pitfalls.

SSS introduced Financial Literacy 101, an online class from Decision Partners, as part of its focus on financial-literacy education. Fifty-eight participants completed the course, which was a prerequisite for accessing an SSS grant.

Some students tracking their expenses during the 10-day "SSS Money Management Challenge" discovered that being a little more thoughtful about purchases can make a big difference. Each participant received a \$5 Luther gift card and a chance to win a \$25 gift card.



“SSS has provided me with indispensable tutoring services, personal advice, and professional guidance.”

Teams of students tested their financial aid knowledge by playing “Financial Aid Jeopardy” at an SSS-sponsored event on April 13, 2011. Alex Trebek, aka Aaron Steffens of the Luther College Financial Aid Office, proved to be a well-informed and humorous host for the hour-long competition. Besides learning valuable information about state and federal financial aid, competitors enjoyed free pizza and refreshments and won some fantastic prizes. “I thought this was a great workshop! I had a lot of fun and am really glad that I made time to attend,” said one of the evaluations.



Financial Assistance

Fifty-one students received SSS grants totaling \$51,000. Individual grants ranged from \$555 up to \$1,250 depending on the student’s unmet need and loan balance. Twelve percent of Luther’s SSS funding from the U.S. Department of Education is directed toward grant aid, with a percentage match coming from the college.

SSS partnered with the Financial Aid Office again this year to provide students with personal assistance filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Five juniors—Sydney Bean, Aaron Hoffland, Hannah Janaky, Michelle McCoy, and Astri Snodgrass—each received a \$1,000 Steven Mark Anderson Scholarship for the upcoming year. They were selected by the Steven Mark Anderson Scholarship selection committee from among 30 applicants. Members of the Anderson family were on hand to present the scholarships during the 2011 SSS Celebration Banquet.



College Success Course

Sixteen students learned important study strategies and life skills in GS110, a two-credit, seven-week course offered both fall and spring semesters. Instructed by SSS Advisor Cheryl Wieseler, the course focuses on goal setting, time management, memory techniques, reading strategies, note-taking skills, test-taking skills, critical thinking, communicating effectively, and utilizing college resources.

Leadership Development

The SSS Leadership Council was introduced with a small group of enthusiastic and hard-working charter members: Sean Brown, Ryan Fett, Nathan Hertel, Justin Kasprzyk, Tyler McCubbin, and Justin Strumpfer. In its inaugural year, the council launched a textbook lending program and gave their time and talent to the annual Celebration Banquet. The council, open to all SSS students, encourages individuals to explore their talents and leadership potential while stimulating ideas for and ownership in the SSS Program.

SSS sponsored the participation of 55 students in the Nobel Peace Prize Forum hosted by Luther College March 4–5, 2011. Featuring presentations by Nobel Peace Prize laureates

Program Services & Accomplishments

and other national and international leaders, the 23rd annual conference focused on the importance of courageous action in the work of peacemaking.

Lending Programs

Participants benefitted from additional learning resources and tools, as the SSS technology lending program expanded to include voice records and Smart Pens. In addition, the SSS Leadership Council launched a textbook lending program through generous donations from students, professors, and others.

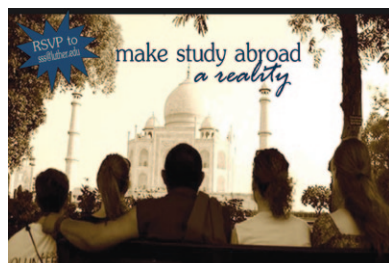
Graduate/Professional School Preparation

Several SSS students planning on graduate study—Chelsi Hammon '12, Justin Kasprzyk '12, Bianca Lutchen '12, and Tyler McCubbin '11—accompanied Chivonne Marlow to a relevant conference September 24–26, 2011, in Lake Geneva, Wis. Hosted by the Wisconsin Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel (WAEOPP) for TRIO students across the Midwest, the conference featured presenter Donald Asher, internationally-known expert on careers and graduate school admissions.

The Graduate School Conference inspired Justin Kasprzyk to spearhead a Graduate Record Examination (GRE) study group for other interested SSS students. The intensive, four-week series was held on Saturdays, February 12–March 5, 2011. SSS provided space, snacks, and the cost of materials.

Study Abroad

Thirty SSS students (primarily first years) learned about making study abroad a reality during a workshop hosted by SSS on September 14, 2010, in cooperation with the Study Abroad and Financial Aid offices. It is worth noting that 29 Luther SSS students (seven seniors and 22 juniors) participated in a study-abroad experience during 2010–11.



Networking

SSS offered several opportunities for students to build relationships with peers. These included the “Eat & Greet” in September, the “Kick Off to Finals Week” board game and pizza night in December, and “Soup’s On” held quarterly in partnership with the Luther Diversity Center and Luther College Woman’s Club.



SSS students Stephanie Adix, Justin Kasprzyk, and Tyler McCubbin hatched a brilliant idea for the Luther Book Shop’s annual Peeps Diorama Contest. With materials provided by SSS, they created a master peep—a recreation of a scene from the movie *Despicable Me*, replacing movie props with Luther landmarks like the bell, Preus Library, and even Martin Luther himself!

"Since my very first days at Luther, the SSS staff has been supportive, welcoming, and always willing to help."

Student Recognition

The SSS bulletin board and Facebook page provided publicity for the many accomplishments of SSS students throughout the year with its "See Students Shine" highlights.

SSS staff honored graduating seniors May 12, 2011, with treats in the office for "SSS Salute to Seniors Day." Each graduate also received an attractive matted frame from SSS in which to proudly display his/her Luther College diploma.



Several new student awards were introduced at the 10th Annual SSS Celebration Banquet on March 30, 2011. Categories included Outstanding Tutor, Exceptional Leadership, Outstanding First-Year Student, Growth, Perfect Attendance, Communication, Frequent Flier, and Humorous.



10th Annual SSS Celebration Banquet

Attendance at the 10th Annual SSS Celebration Banquet reached an all-time high of 134, including 84 SSS participants. Guests enjoyed a gourmet meal, humor, entertainment, door prizes, and words of wisdom from SSS's very own Chivonne Marlow. Numerous SSS students, including members of the SSS Leadership Council, were involved in the event's planning and execution.



Administration and Finance

New Faces

SSS hired two new staff members this year. Chivonne Marlow joined the team in August 2010, just in time for the start of the academic year. Her diverse professional experience includes service as a residence hall director, parole officer, grant writer, substance abuse prevention specialist, and Educational Talent Search advisor. She serves as an advisor and the tutoring and mentoring coordinator for Student Support Services.

Jennifer Folstad joined the team in February 2011 as administrative assistant. She replaced Rachel Vsetecka, who was promoted to Luther's assistant director of annual giving after working in SSS for 5 ½ years. Jennifer dedicated herself to social work through Northeast Iowa Community Action prior to working for a local law firm the past decade.

Evaluation and Planning

SSS continued to rely on feedback from students in order to strengthen program services and activities. Evaluation instruments included event surveys and a year-end evaluation through Norse Docs. A first-year student focus group held April 28, 2011, also provided valuable feedback for planning related to peer mentoring.

Record Keeping

The SSS team successfully transitioned to the Care Network for record keeping and reporting purposes. The Care Network also functions as a college-wide early alert system, triggering appropriate actions as academic and personal concerns are submitted by staff and faculty.

Student Development

Every new SSS participant received a binder containing helpful information and resources as well as forms utilized by the program for goal setting and personal development.

Assessment

SSS developed a new intake assessment instrument for incoming participants. The online assessment will be completed by new participants at the beginning and end of their first year in order to target areas of need and measure gains made. Assessment categories include Motivation and Responsibility, Organization, Self Confidence and Social Interaction, Healthy Living, General Learning Strategies, Writing, Active Reading, Note-Taking, Testing, Classroom Engagement, Time Management, and Money Management.

Professional Development

Tammy Hove attended the 2011 On Course National Conference in Long Beach, Calif., in April. Sessions focused on innovative learner-centered strategies for empowering students to become active, responsible learners.

Cheryl Wieseler attended the 2011 National College Survival Conference in Nashville, Tenn., in June. Presenters offered practical applications for improving student achievement and retention.

Chivonne Marlow attended a June conference in Portland, Ore., hosted by Academic Impressions. "Developing a Comprehensive Peer Mentor Program" offered timely information in preparation for the introduction of SSS's peer mentoring component.

“SSS has provided me with invaluable academic and financial assistance.”

The Luther College Student Support Services Program received \$293,864 in grant monies during the 2010–11 fiscal year to fund services for 160 eligible students (approximately \$1,837 per student). In addition, Luther College contributed \$23,685 toward the project. College financial support included matching dollars for student grants, along with costs unallowable to the primary SSS budget such as Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) institutional membership dues.

The SSS Program also benefits from an endowed scholarship known as the Steven Mark Anderson Scholarship, for which SSS students compete annually.

Federal Grant Funding \$293,864

\$4,840 Meetings and Events **2%**

\$5,007 Student Travel **2%**

\$5,334 Equipment (lending program) **2%**

\$5,762 Professional Development **2%**

\$10,060 Educational Materials, Supplies, Other **3%**

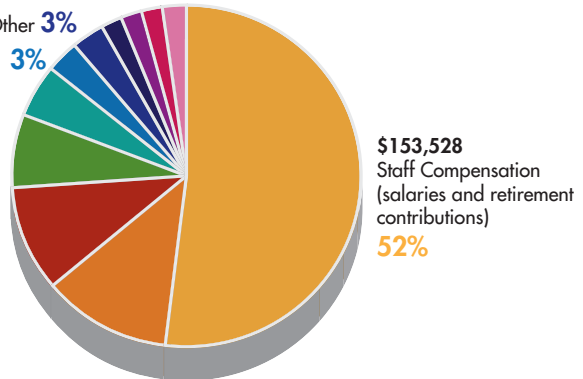
\$10,758 FICA, Disability and Life Insurance **3%**

\$14,105 Peer Tutoring **5%**

\$19,249 Indirect Costs **7%**

\$31,221 Health Care Premiums **10%**
(employer’s share of medical insurance)

\$34,000 SSS Grants **12%**



Luther College Funding \$23,685

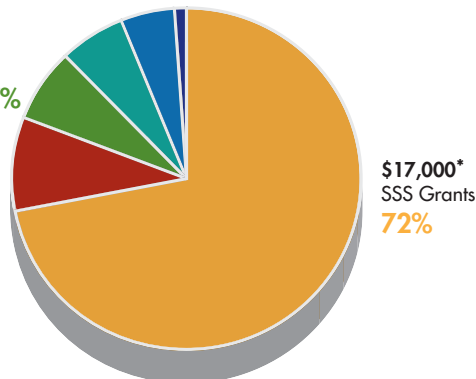
\$370 Meetings and Events **1%**

\$1,118 Supplies, Other **5%**

\$1,450 Printing/Copying **6%**

\$1,615 Professional Memberships **7%**

\$2,132 Equipment **9%**



*This is the college’s required share of SSS grant monies, which directly benefit first-year and sophomore SSS students.

In the interest of sustainability and fiscal responsibility, SSS has printed and made available to constituents a limited quantity of these reports. Please contact our office at 563-387-1269 or sss@luther.edu to obtain a copy.



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