



# GRAND OPENING

Student Academic Success Center at NSU opened Oct. 11

To celebrate the establishment of its permanent home, the Student Academic Success Center (SASC) at Northeastern State University invited the campus and Tahlequah communities to its grand opening Oct. 11.

The ceremony took place at the new location on the first floor of the John Vaughan Library from 3-4:30 p.m. The ribbon was officially cut at 3:15 p.m.

NSU President Steve Turner, Provost Bill Rugg and Director Jerrid Freeman gave presentations regarding the center. Following the brief speaking, attendees enjoyed snacks, refreshment, and tours.

The SASC is designed to enhance the academic performance of students. Its stated mission is “to create an environment where each individual student is positively embraced and develops the connections necessary to thrive in the college community and in life following graduation.”

Available to all students throughout their tenure at NSU, the SASC will serve as an information, referral and follow-up nexus for all other academic and co-curricular service operations. By offering such services to students, the SASC hopes to increase retention and graduation rates.

“We have served or reached out to about 800 students in the past three months,” said Lauren Barela, coordinator of career counseling services for the SASC. “We have assisted for reasons including academic consultation, tutoring needs, career counseling and students who may be struggling academically or having personal difficulties.”

The center was created from a five-year Title III grant which supplies federal funds through the Department of Education. Its primary goal is to increase student retention and graduation rates by providing academic services and advisement.

**For more information** about the NSU Student Academic Success Center call **918-444-3651** or visit [www.nsuok.edu/success](http://www.nsuok.edu/success).

# MEET the TEAM

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission for the Student Academic Success Center at Northeastern State University is to create an environment where each individual student is positively embraced and develops the connections necessary to thrive in the college community and in life following graduation.



### Director of the SASC

**Dr. Jerrid P. Freeman** is the Director of the Student Academic Success Center. He completed his bachelor's in Secondary mathematics, physics, and coaching from the University of Nebraska at Kearney, his masters at Bowling Green State University in College Student Personnel and his Doctorate at North Carolina State University. His passion lies in positively impacting the staff and students he interacts with and helping them reach their full potential and life goals.



### Coordinator of Learning Assistance Programs

**Kristal Soderstrom** joined the Student Academic Success Center in June of 2012. Kristal is married with two step-children and three animals. She is originally from Texas, but spent most of her childhood in Bartlesville. She began her experience at NSU as a non-traditional student while completing her Bachelor's degree in General Studies and Master's degree in English Literature. She has been at NSU for over 4 years, either as a student, staff, or adjunct faculty. While Kristal enjoys teaching, her true joy is making a difference for students.



### Coordinator of Career Counseling Services

**Lauren Barela** joined the Student Academic Success Center at Northeastern State University in May 2012. She moved here from Texas where she received her bachelor's degree in Family and Consumer Science majoring in Fashion Merchandising with a minor in Business Administration from Texas State University in San Marcos, TX. Lauren spent 5 years in the hospitality industry before her move to higher education. She worked for an independent resort where she started as an event coordinator. She then joined Marriott as a sales manager and was promoted to Director of Sales and Marketing. Lauren is married to NSU football coach, Mike Barela and they live in Tahlequah, OK.



### Coordinator of Outreach, Referral, and Follow-Up

LaWanna Summers is a native of Tulsa and graduated from Northeastern State University with her Bachelor's in Business Administration in the summer of 2008. As an undergrad, LaWanna went from being an introvert to an extrovert due largely in part to involvement in campus events and organizations. Now as a professional, LaWanna would like to help current and future Riverhawks live the life they have imagined, gathering here at NSU and going even further through the services offered at the Student Academic Success Center.



### Coordinator of Academic Consultation

Olaf Standley joined the Student Academic Success Center at Northeastern State University in June 2012 and is a graduate of Northeastern State University. He is originally from Amarillo, Texas, but spent the majority of his life in Tulsa. He began his college career as a non-traditional student at Tulsa Community College, and received both his Bachelors and Masters in English from NSU. Olaf was the student body president of the NSU Broken Arrow campus during his undergrad and the President of the Graduate Student Association of the College of Liberal Arts during his Graduate work. He is a guitarist and proud uncle.

# ENHANCING STUDENT SUCCESS through ASSESSMENT

*By Kristal Soderstrom, Coordinator of Learning Assistance Programs*

The Student Academic Success Center has a number of performance measures it tracks as required by the Title III grant. This data follows nine specific requirements and covers information ranging from advising sessions or persistence rates to degree changes or comparisons with national data.

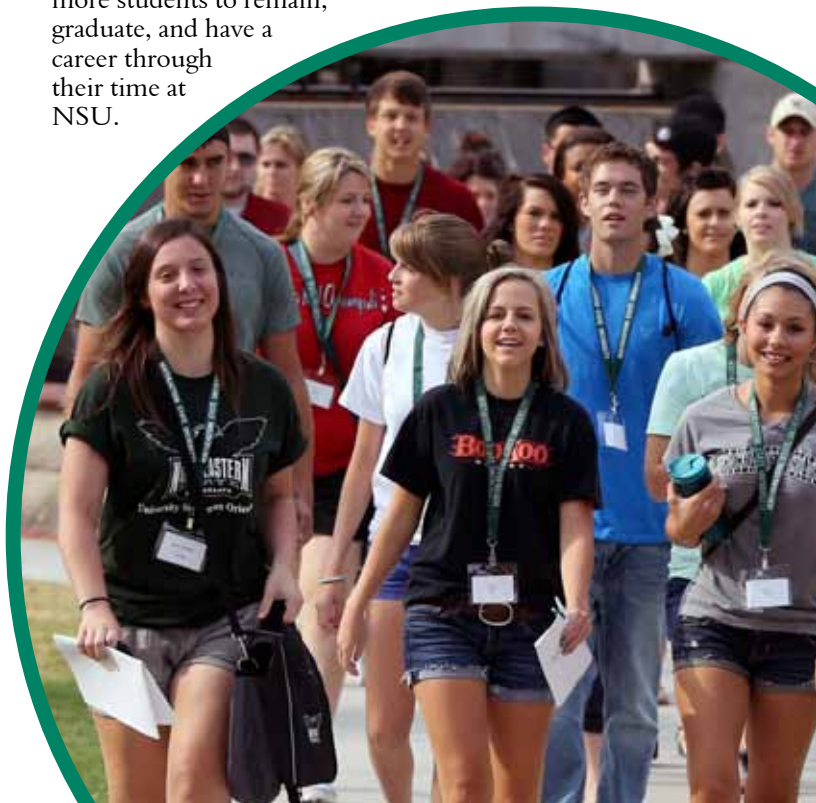
The SASC seeks to develop comparisons between NSSE, NSU, Southwest Public, and Carnegie Class data. Some examples of these comparisons are student-faculty interactions, graduation and retention rates, and advising training. In addition, the SASC will be working with EBI to gain further assessment and understanding of the NSU campus, faculty, and students regarding student services, and the NSU climate.

During the month of September, the Student Academic Success Center tracked the number of visitors to the center and the number of website visits we received. These numbers will continue to be tracked to show the interaction and level of impact the SASC is having with the NSU students. The SASC does not limit its interactions to those who come to our center and visit our website. We also reach out to students who are referred to us by faculty and staff or who show a need for assistance based on their responses to the various MAP-Works surveys taken in the University Strategies and Capstone classes. All combined, the Coordinators of the Student Academic Success Center have already reached out to over 800 NSU students.

The Student Academic Success Center also seeks to utilize the information already gathered by Institutional Research to show changes in the student body over time. This data

ranges back to 2001 and will continue to be tracked in an effort to improve success and the overall educational experience for NSU students.

As the SASC continues its assessment, we hope to show a growth and development among our center and among the students and faculty of NSU. We ultimately want more students to remain, graduate, and have a career through their time at NSU.



The image shows a close-up of a wall with large, blue, three-dimensional letters. The top row of letters reads 'STUDENT' and the bottom row reads 'SUCCESS'. The letters are mounted on a light yellow wall. In the background, a window and a desk area are visible, suggesting an office or student center environment.

# STUDENT SUCCESS

## **BIOGRAPHY OF SASC**

Northeastern State University approved a grant for the new Student Academic Success Center on October 1, 2011. The purpose of the SASC is to provide for initial and continuing multimodal contact with NSU's students in order to increase retention and graduation rates. The Center will also serve as an information, referral and follow-up hub for all other academic and co-curricular service operations. The SASC became available to all NSU students at beginning of Fall 2012 semester and will remain accessible throughout their tenure at Northeastern State University.

*Student Academic Success Center Biographies: Meet the Team*



# CAREER COUNSELING SERVICES at the **SASC**

*By Lauren Barela; Coordinator of Career Counseling*

Here at the Student Academic Success Center, all coordinators have the opportunity to help students decide on a career path they would like to pursue after graduation. Here at the center, we use a program called FOCUS 2 Assessment.

This program has been continually used by the Career Services department and is very helpful for students trying to figure out what they should major in and what careers pair with certain majors. The FOCUS 2 Assessment is an online, interactive, self-guided career, and education planning system designed to help students make decisions about their future career goals and education plans.

FOCUS 2 will guide students through career planning readiness, work interests, values, skills, personality type, and leisure time interests. It will broaden their career options and discover occupations matching their personal preferences and attributes. Decide which career fields, majors and training programs are best for students and plan their career and educational pathway that will

support their personal needs and goals.

Here at the center, we also guide students according to a Career Path Plan. This is a four year plan designed to direct students through awareness and assessment their freshman year, explore and narrow their sophomore year, network and confirm in their junior year, and plan and job search in their senior year. This plan will guide them to complete their career goals.

A few other career readiness resources we offer are connecting students with campus organizations, resume and cover letter building, interviewing skills, portfolio assembly, and resources when applying for jobs and internships.

The Student Academic Success Center staff strives to guide and advise students with their education goals in mind, along with preparing students for their career after graduation.



# ACADEMIC CONSULTATION at the **SASC**

*By Olaf Standley; Coordinator of Academic Consultation*

In the Student Academic Success Center, we combine academic advisement and career counseling along with referrals to tutoring centers and all campus student services. This creates a holistic advising session in which we prepare students for each semester, their college career, and life after college. We are here to not only help students navigate the path to graduation in academics, but also to help them get involved in college life, get through tough classes, and get the most out of their experience at NSU.

We, in concert with First Year Experience and Second Year Outreach, serve as general education academic advisors and help students understand not only the general education requirements at NSU, but also the process of declaring a major, the navigation of DARS (Degree Audit Reporting System) and banner. Our goal, in academic consultation, is to guide students down the road to completing all of their requirements for graduation.

# SMART THINKING a NEW WAY of LEARNING

Balancing student life and study time can be difficult. It seems the more hectic life gets, grades tend to decrease and suffer. Traditional tutoring has proven effective in many circumstances, but often times student's find themselves unable to attend tutoring sessions due to lack of time, but there is an alternative. SmarThinking is an online tutoring service dedicated to being flexible for students who cannot seem to find time for traditional tutoring hours; it is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. All tutors have higher education experience, most have taught for an average of nine years, and ninety percent have a doctorate or master's degree. SmarThinking covers a variety of subjects such as: Basic

Math, Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Calculus, Writing, General Chemistry, Physics, Accounting, Statistics, Bi-lingual Math, Economics, Introduction to Human anatomy and Physiology, Biology, Spanish, Organic Chemistry, Introductory Finance, Math beyond Calculus 2, and Advanced Statistics. Tutoring is also available in the following Nursing categories: Medical Surgery, Core Plans, Pathophysiology, Pharmacology, Anatomy and Physiology, Medical Assisting, Medical Terminology, Allied Health Anatomy and Physiology, and Allied Health Pharmacology. SmarThinking is free for all NSU students and is accessible through Blackboard. <http://www.smarthinking.com/>



## MAP-Works

*By LaWanna Summers; Coordinator of Outreach, Referral, and Follow-Up*

MAP-Works is a great resource for both students and faculty. This survey helps students discover areas of strength as well as areas for potential improvement. Upon taking the MAP-Works survey, students will receive a detailed report that analyzes their academic and social behavior, helping students evaluate how they spend their time and how to utilize their strengths. NSU also operates MAP-Works as a referral system. The SASC uses this to make sure each individual student is getting necessary

help. Referrals can help with a variety of different concerns anywhere from financial aid to career planning and internships. Students can come to the Student Academic Success Center and meet with a coordinator to discuss any concerns. The entire goal of MAP-Works is to make achievement possible by helping students succeed in whatever way possible. We encourage students and faculty to use our website as a resource and connection to the MAP-Works survey and referral system.



"If there is something that needs to be accomplished, figure out a way to get it done and do it. Unnecessary amounts of time are often spent fretting about deadlines and the limited time we have to get tasks done. We will often miss the opportunities that are right in front of us." – *Jerrid Freeman*

The key to time management is prioritizing. Figuring out what lies at the top of the priority list is the best beginning. As cliché as it sounds, sometimes the most productive thing to do is make a list. Begin with brainstorming, write down a list of goals that need to be accomplished and prioritize them. Sometimes the simplest of tasks, such as creating a to-do list, can be the most important.

# TIP of the QUARTER

# STUDENT APPRECIATION EVENT

The SASC appreciates the students who have utilized our services, resources and met with our Coordinators. We will be hosting quarterly events to show our appreciation. This coming November we will host an appreciation event day at our center. We encourage the students who have utilized our services to come in at any time during the day and receive a special gift. Students who participate will also have the opportunity to register for giveaways.



## UPCOMING EVENT OVERVIEW

**NOVEMBER 21-25:** Thanksgiving Break, campuses closed

**December 7:** Last Day to Withdraw from a Single Class or Withdraw from all Sixteen Week Classes

(**NOTE:** A grade of “W” can be assigned in classes from which a student withdraws between November 9 and December 7 only if the student has a passing grade at the time of the withdrawal.)

**December 10 - 14:** Finals

**December 14:** Semester Ends

**December 14-15:** Commencement at NSU Tahlequah

**December 18:** Faculty Grade Entry Closes (1:00 pm)

**December 21:** Grades Available via goNSU

**January 1:** Applications for Spring Graduation (Bachelor's and Master's Degree)

SASC@nsuok.edu  
918-444-3651  
1st floor library  
www.nsuok.edu/success



Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/StudentAcademicSuccessCenter>



Twitter [https://twitter.com/nsu\\_sasc](https://twitter.com/nsu_sasc)