

Fall 2014

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Get to Know: Grad Assistant Kristen Bobrik

Kristen Bobrik enrolled in the INT 210 peer tutoring course for practical reasons: an on-campus job. Once there, her desire to prepare as a future educator and share her love of the classes she took kicked in. Now, nearly four years and two degrees later, Kristen sees that working for ASAP was always more than just a job.

Why become a Grad Assistant? For Kristen, the GA position was a determining factor in choosing to pursue her M.S. Ed. in literacy at SUNY Cortland. "I wanted to keep tutoring and take my knowledge to the next level."

What have *you* learned by tutoring others? "The art of managing time, maintaining relationships, responsibility, and working in a professional setting. Tutoring has helped me define the meaning of success."

When working with students, how *do* you

define success? "As tutor, it's not mine to define; students have different ideas and goals, from 'going to class' to all As. It's what's important to them that counts."

What's ASAP's graduation gift to you? "A more holistic and realistic view of the different experiences we all have learning about ourselves."



Online Tutoring Success Story: STAR-NY

Once upon a time, ASAP hatched a little OWL (Night Online Writing and Learning) that struggled to fly. While students flocked to the off-hours service, cost was factor in keeping it aloft. Fast forward seven years, and that sleepy OWL has transformed into a shining SUNY star: STAR-NY, that is!

Today's students want tutoring that fits their schedules, and the 13-school strong consortium meets that need by sharing resources and expertise to provide real-time, online evening support—for free. STAR-NY joins together a full complement of SUNY institutions, from research-focused universities to comprehensive and community colleges. In the same spirit, a diversity of SUNY talent serves as tutors, including certified student peers, graduate students, adjuncts, and full-time professionals.

STAR-NY stands a breed apart from other online services for two key reasons. First is the training: every tutor is schooled in the

Socratic method of questioning, designed to help students develop critical thinking skills, just like ASAP tutors do. Second is the real-time format. Unlike "drop box" services where students submit work and wait for a response that corrects and edits, STAR-NY tutors engage students in real conversations that lead to clarity and independence. Of course, neither of these would be meaningful without quality control. STAR-NY's QC Team checks session records and offers valuable feedback to tutors and their supervisors.

Most nights of the week, students from all over NY keep tutors busy with Writing (except foreign language) for any course below the 400 level, Math for Pre-Algebra, Algebra, Pre-Calculus, Calc I, and Intro to Statistics. New last fall, students may also get help with Accounting and Introductory level/general Chemistry a few nights a week. As the only "walk-in" tutoring available, some Cortland students even use STAR-NY

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**We're here
to help!**

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Academic Probation? ASAP can help!

No one arrives at SUNY Cortland planning to be placed on academic probation. Yet, spring term finds some students receiving the college's official wake-up call. If this includes you or a student you know, take heart: while probation is a serious communication about the potential for dismissal, ASAP specializes in helping students understand their academic challenges and working with students to develop a course of action.

Helping students understand themselves as learners is the first step. The Study Behavior Inventory (SBI) gives students a snapshot of their aptitudes and beliefs in eight key academic areas: time management, study/reading, general study habits, listening and note taking, writing, test anxiety, test taking, and faculty relations. The VARK Guide to Learning Styles (VARK) helps

students think about how they prefer to take in information: visually, aurally, read/write, kinesthetically, or multi-modally.

Armed with the results of these self-report surveys, students and tutors work together to customize study tools and strategies, as well as prioritize other student support offerings across campus. The tutors' goal is to empower students to independently and accurately take in, think about, and organize information so that they're better prepared to demonstrate knowledge in their classes. Whether it's a time-management tweak, a full-blown study habit overhaul, or something in between, ASAP takes a proactive approach to helping students persist—and succeed—in college!

From Sleepy OWL to Shining Star: STAR-NY

(Continued from front page)

in addition to their regular professional and peer tutor appointments.

Sundays are proving to be the busiest night, with as many as 15 students concurrently seeking assistance during the five-hour window. The vast majority of students self-identify as freshman and about 67% are new users. However, familiarity seems to breed delight, as some students work with various tutors in multiple subjects—all in the same night!

So the tale of the sleepy little OWL ends well, yet STAR-NY's story is really just beginning. This semester, students have access to a third night of chemistry tutoring and one additional SUNY (so far) has joined for fall 2015. As for the future, the consortium is investigating the addition of more tutors per night for current subjects and graduate-level writing support.



SUNY Cortland students access STAR-NY services through the Night OWL tab on the ASAP website:

<http://www2.cortland.edu/offices/asap/online-tutoring/> . For more information about the consortium, including a full list of participating SUNY schools, check out: <http://www2.cortland.edu/offices/asap/star-ny/> . With a strong commitment to creating independent learners and a keen sense of student needs, STAR-NY is shining bright.

About ASAP

We provide academic support to undergraduate and graduate students of all ability and achievement levels through tutoring in writing, reading, math, time management, and study skills, as well as through our Supplemental Instruction, Peer Tutoring, PLTL and online tutoring programs. Students who have regularly used ASAP's services tend to demonstrate increased academic confidence, stronger learning skills, and improvement in their coursework.