



ECONOMICS LEARNING CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

Peer Tutor Manual

Prepared by: Brian C. Jenkins*

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*Visiting Lecturer and Director of the Economics Learning Center, Department of Economics,
University of California, Irvine. Email: bcjenkin@uci.edu.

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1 Overview

The Economics Learning Center (ELC) is a new tutoring program in the Department of Economics at UC, Irvine.¹ The primary objectives of the ELC are to provide:

1. A location where students in Basic Economics I (Econ 20A), Basic Economics II (Econ 20B), and Intermediate Economics I (Econ 100A) may join their peers to review lecture notes, discuss assignments, study for examinations, and in general, do economics.
2. A staff of graduate Teaching Assistants (TAs) and undergraduate Peer Tutors (PTs) trained specifically to facilitate discussion and collaboration among students that use the Center.

Currently, the ELC plans to serve only UCI students enrolled in Econ 20A, Econ 20B, and Econ 100A. Contingent on the performance and popularity of the ELC and continued support from the university, the ELC may expand the scope of economics courses for which tutoring services are available.

The ELC is located in Social Science Tower (SST) 165 and is tentatively scheduled to be open Monday through Friday, from 1 – 9pm, excluding holidays. The ELC is a walk-in only facility and assistance is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Typically, the ELC will be staffed by two graduate TAs and two undergraduate PTs. The graduate TAs are also assigned to work with either Econ

¹The ELC is supported by the Vice Provost for Academic Planning, the Dean of the School of Social Sciences, and the Department of Economics.

20A, 20B, or 100A.

As PTs, you play a key role at the ELC. You have demonstrated a capacity to excel in the courses that the ELC serves. As students who have recently taken the courses for which you will be tutoring, you are in a unique position to understand the specific challenges facing students that use the ELC. The faculty of Econ 20A, 20B, and 100A are hoping that your experience, insight, and effort will improve the quality of education for every student that uses the ELC.

Relevant information about the ELC including the schedule and guidelines for students that use the ELC can be found at the website for the ELC:

<http://www.briancjenkins.com/elc/>

2 General and Administrative Procedures

1. **Attend all hours for which you are scheduled.**
 - (a) Arrive on time and ready to work.
 - (b) Stay for the full time and do not continue to work past the time for which you are scheduled.

2. **Absences.**
 - (a) Notify the Director at least 24 hours in advance if you are unable to attend a time for which you are scheduled.
 - (b) If necessary, you may swap times with another PT. You and the person with whom you are swapping must notify the director 24 hours in advance.

3. **Report** any suspected instances of academic dishonesty, harassment, or any other inappropriate behavior to the Director as soon as possible.

4. **Do not work “off the clock.”** As an employee of the ELC, it is important that you do not tutor ELC users outside of the hours for which you are receiving compensation.
 - (a) Do not continue to work after your shift has ended or make arrangements to meet with ELC users for tutoring outside of the ELC.
 - (b) Do not provide tutoring services to ELC users via email, telephone, social media, and so on.

5. Timesheets.

- (a) Each PT is responsible for electronically submitting his or her own timesheet using the website: <https://timesheet.uci.edu/>
- (b) Each PT receives documentation indicating the start and end dates of each pay period, the deadline for final online timesheet submission, and pay dates.
- (c) To ensure that the Director has time to approve your timesheet, you must submit your timesheet by 12am on the last day of the pay period.

6. Name tags are provided and must be visible while you are working in the ELC**7. Opening, closing, and facility security.**

- (a) PTs scheduled to begin work at 1pm should expect that SST 165 will be opened by a graduate TA. If the ELC is not open at the time that your shift is to begin, contact (in the following order):
 - the ELC Director
 - Jennifer dos Santos, Department Analyst: (949) 824-5788
 - Adam Cook, Department Manager: (949) 824-3655
- (b) *Under no circumstances* should SST 165 be left unlocked and unoccupied. If for some reason the ELC needs to be locked and no staff member has a key to the ELC, contact the Director, the ELC listed above, or campus police for assistance.

8. **Beginning of shift.** At the start of each shift, each staff member will:
 - (a) Be prepared for the topics that they are likely to encounter and know which class has an exam coming up.
 - (b) Sign PT the sign-in sheet.
 - (c) Put on name tag.

9. **Maintenance.** Each staff member should do his or her part to keep SST 165 in good appearance. This includes:
 - (a) Reminding students that use the center to pick up after themselves.
 - (b) Enforcing the prohibition on food and drinks in open containers.
 - (c) Returning chairs to their right locations.
 - (d) Keeping the white boards clean.

10. **Be professional.** Do not do your own work or conduct person conversations unless there are no students in the ELC

11. **Attend bi-weekly staff meetings.** Staff meetings will be held in the ELC. The time will be be decided during training.

3 Tutoring Responsibilities and Expectations

1. As each student arrives to the center, a staff member will:
 - (a) Greet the student.
 - (b) Make sure that the student swipes his or her ID card upon arrival. If for some reason the system does not record their information, please have him or her manually sign the sign-in sheet. *All students visiting the ELC must have their UCI student ID cards.*
 - (c) Help them find a table where students from the same class are working.
 - (d) If all members of the ELC staff are helping other people, the newly-arriving student should be informed that he or she will be helped when possible.
2. As best as possible, work with groups of students and instead of individuals.
3. Avoid directly teaching to students in the ELC as much as possible.
 - (a) Your objective is to help students learn from each other by encouraging them to rely on each other, their lecture notes, and other resources from class.
 - (b) *Occasionally* it may be appropriate to use a whiteboard to demonstrate a concept to a group
4. Check to be sure that students have brought their lecture notes with them.
 - (a) The ELC is a complement – not a substitute – for class attendance.

- (b) Students without lecture notes or who have clearly not been attending class should be dismissed.
5. Be respectful of faculty.
 - (a) Avoid criticizing a faculty member's teaching style.
 - (b) Never comment on whether you agree with a faculty member's grading decision.
 6. Be respectful of all students and staff.
 7. Be honest about your limitations. If you do not know the answer to a question or are unfamiliar with a topic:
 - (a) Try looking at the student's or students' lecture notes and/or book.
 - (b) Ask the student or students to wait while you find another staff member that can be more helpful.
 - (c) Under no circumstances should you make up answers. It is far better for a student to have a question unresolved than to be misled.
 8. Only offer assistance for topics from courses that are explicitly served by the ELC.

4 Academic Honesty

UC, Irvine takes academic honesty seriously. As students and employees of the university, you should too. Success of the ELC depends on our collective ability to promote the highest standards of academic integrity at the ELC. Aside from the obvious obligation to not engage in unethical conduct yourself, you should do what is reasonable to prevent students from using the ELC as a venue for academic misconduct.

Some things that you can do to promote academic honesty are:

1. Do not share course materials from previous quarters with students using the ELC. This includes old lecture notes and exams.
2. Avoid answering specific questions about homework assignments. When possible, ask students to phrase specific questions to you that will allow you to address their difficulty without answering their homework problems.
3. Do not accept gifts of value from students that use the ELC.
4. Do not tutor students from Econ 20A, 20B, or 100A outside of the ELC.

Each of you has been in school long enough to know what cheating is and to know that it is wrong. In general, academic integrity is straightforward, but there are certainly instances where it is not obvious what is ethical. If you have *any* questions regarding ethical conduct in the ELC – academic or otherwise – contact the ELC Director immediately.

If you suspect academic misconduct, you must report the details to the Director of the ELC immediately. For more information on the university's policies regarding academic honesty, see the website: <http://honesty.uci.edu/>.

5 Inappropriate Behavior

Every staff member and student using the ELC should feel welcome and should expect to be treated with respect. Inappropriate behavior, including harassment, discrimination, and abusive or derogatory language, will not be tolerated in the ELC. If you witness inappropriate behavior by a staff member or a student, you must report the details of the event to the Director of the ELC immediately. A student engaging in inappropriate behavior toward a staff member or another student may be dismissed from the ELC by any staff member and is subject to a permanent ban from the ELC and possibly disciplinary proceedings from the university. Inappropriate behavior by any staff member is grounds for immediate dismissal and possibly disciplinary proceedings from the university.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding inappropriate behavior in the ELC, please contact the Director of the ELC immediately so that the issue can be resolved as quickly as possible.

6 Expectations for Students Using the ELC

1. **Arrive prepared.** Come to the ELC with a plan for which topics you wish to cover or assignments you plan to work on.
2. **Bring your student ID.** Everyone that uses the ELC must check in by swiping their ID through a card reader.
3. **Expect to work with your peers.** The ELC staff is there to help, but – especially during peak hours – you should expect to use most of your time at the ELC working with other students in your class.
4. **Bring your lecture notes to the ELC.** Class attendance is a requirement for using the ELC.
5. **Contribute** to discussions. Do not expect to free-ride off of others.
6. **Be respectful** to other students in the ELC and to the ELC staff.
7. Only bring **drinks** that are in *closed containers*.
8. **Absolutely avoid eating food** in the ELC *unless* it is provided directly by the ELC staff.
9. **Keep cell phone conversations out of the ELC.** Please go outside if you have to use the phone.
10. **Keep the ELC clean** by cleaning up after yourself. Please keep track of your belongings and throw away any trash before you leave.