CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES
AND
GAVILAN JOINT
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

#90-0007
San Benito County Basic Skills Curriculum

FUNDING CATEGORY & AWARD | ELIGIBLE PROGRAM | PROJECT CATEGORY
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Grant = $9,246 | D --- Ed Services For New Clientele | Curriculum Design

PROJECT PRODUCT | PROJECT TOPIC #1 | PROJECT TOPIC #2 | ACADEMIC SUBJECT
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Resource Materials | Basic Skills | Inter-Disciplinary

PROJECT DIRECTOR | PROJECT SUPERVISOR
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Dolores Kimball, Director Basic Skills Center | Kent Child, Dean Liberal Arts & Sciences

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION
Gavilan College created a comprehensive, inter-disciplinary basic skills curriculum in reading, writing and math for its San Benito County basic skills center. The target population included educationally disadvantaged, unemployed and economically disadvantaged students. Goals included raising basic skill levels to at least the ninth grade level, increased success in college level course work, increased future permanent employment and an increased standard of living for those enrolled in the program. The curriculum was disseminated to the main campus of Gavilan College.
San Benito County Basic Skills Curriculum

This project will create a comprehensive, inter-disciplinary basic skills curriculum in reading, writing and math for Gavilan College's basic skills center in San Benito County. The curriculum will be designed to meet the specific needs of San Benito County students, a large percentage of whom are:

1) educationally disadvantaged
2) unemployed
3) economically disadvantaged

The project will have as its main objectives designing a curriculum which will meet these students' unique needs by:

1) Raising basic skills levels to at least ninth grade level.
2) Increase the level of success for college level coursework.
3) Increase future permanent employment.
4) Raise standards of living.

The project is designed to run from 7/1/90 to 8/15/90.

The project budget total is $9,246 and includes salaries, supplies and travel. The project will consist of two basic skills Instructors gathering materials, creating new materials, and building a coherent curriculum to increase basic reading, writing and math skills.

The curriculum will be in place at the basic skills center in September, 1990, and will remain in effect there in the future. The curriculum will be evaluated by pre- and post-testing of students, as well as monitoring students' success in the program and in future college educational and employment training endeavors.

The curriculum will be disseminated to the main campus of Gavilan College. Fund for Instructional Improvement
San Benito County Basic Skills Curriculum

1. Specific Educational Program Being Addressed

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM
Gavilan College is a semi-rural institution of higher education located in South Santa Clara, and San Benito Counties. The district’s service area has been projected to be the fastest growing housing market within California. The college population has increased approximately 27% over the last two years. Statistics within the college service area record the Hispanic population to range from 70% in San Benito County, to 25% in the northern communities of the district.

Of these ethnic minority populations, it is estimated that the high school dropout rate for the disadvantaged Hispanic community is at the bottom end; 30% in some communities to over 60% in others. Of the female students who drop out of school because of pregnancy, over 90% are Hispanic, and of the "single parent head-of-household" group receiving Aid To Families With Dependent Children (AFDC), over 75% have Spanish surnames. The unemployment rate in San Benito County (17%-25%) is one of the highest in the state. 60% of the Hispanic population fall below the Federal Guideline Poverty level. The occupations in the area have traditionally related to agriculture. Agriculture has steadily declined in the past decade and is forecast to decline an additional 4% by the year 2000.

The two counties that Gavilan College serves are quite different in their economic outlook. As stated earlier, San Benito County recorded one of the highest unemployment rates statewide, and is moving away from its agricultural base. South Santa Clara County, on the other hand, is part of the phenomenon that is Silicon Valley. Once educated and trained, Gavilan students can compete in a rich economic market. Low-income and minority students in San Benito County have been traditionally locked out of this market due to lack of basic literacy skills, vocational skills training, college training and degree programs, and economic and cultural inequities. An FII grant would allow for the necessary funds with which to design, develop and implement a comprehensive, inter-disciplinary basic skills curriculum in reading, writing, and mathematics for Gavilan College's Basic Skills Center located in San Benito County.
It has become apparent to Gavilan College that educationally disadvantaged minority students need to become involved in more specialized non-traditional extensive basic skills remediation classes in order to realize their potential to succeed in a college program of study. These students require levels of specialized language-based curriculum, and individualized assistance which utilizes analogies and comparisons that are relevant to the students' life experiences. Many of the educationally disadvantaged minority students' economic, social, and cultural backgrounds have very distinct cultural differences from the traditional college student, faculty and staff. A large number of the educationally disadvantaged students have a different world view and frame of reference that may be incompatible with existing Institutional expectations, classroom methodologies, Instructional analogies, or support service delivery systems. As the diversity and numbers of educationally disadvantaged students continues to grow, college employees at all levels realize that traditional assumptions about the teaching/learning process, techniques and curriculum do not fit this special student population. It is difficult for both students and faculty when traditional college remediation classes and services do not meet the existing needs of low-income minority students wishing to successfully transfer through the college system. Basic Skills students have traditionally not been successful at completing remedial and college level math and English classes.

To begin to address these concerns, there exists an Immediate need to initiate the process which will allow the Institution to embark upon Innovative specialized instruction and support services for eligible students. These services need to have as their focus the development of concepts, strategies, methodologies, and language approaches which aim at developing an enhanced understanding of how the disadvantaged student population learns. At the present time, Gavilan College has developed a core foundation of remedial classes (Reading: English 220, English 230A-D; Writing and Composition: English 240 and English 250; Math: Math 200), but new non-traditional basic skill classes are needed to provide a transition to traditional remedial and college level classes.

In order to address the needs of this student population, and to ultimately attain the goal of retention and graduation for these students, the FII grant proposes to design, develop, and implement additional non-traditional basic skill courses both within the existing sequence, as well as the development of new bridge courses.
2. Specific Problems Being Addressed

PROBLEMS ADDRESSED
San Benito County, located 10 miles southeast of Gavilan College, has a unique and varied population with very specific needs. The county’s traditional base of an agriculturally oriented economy presents serious problems for a large segment of the population. These problems are as follows:

Need #1) There exists in San Benito County an appallingly large proportion of the population who are educationally disadvantaged. Of the total population, 25 years old or older, a full 44% have less than a high school education and 29% have less than a ninth grade education. The educational needs of this group are enormous, particularly in the area of basic skills.

Need #2) The seasonal employment offered by agriculture (including the county’s two largest companies, the food processing plants) helps to cause one of the highest unemployment rates in the state. According to the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy, the county’s annual unemployment rate is 17.8% (Feb. 1988 data), much higher than the rates for the state or the nation. Estimates rose as high as 35% after the October earthquake which destroyed a large portion of the downtown area, and caused severe damage to many businesses, including the aforementioned food processing plants.

Need #3) A disproportionately large segment of San Benito County’s population is economically disadvantaged (24% of those 16 years old or older). In addition, 11.2% of all families in the county are below the poverty level. (Statistics from Table 10, JTPA planning Information, January 15, 1990).

Need #4) These exists a tremendous need to develop a cohesive, interdisciplinary basic skills curriculum, encompassing reading, writing and math, designed to meet the specific needs of San Benito County students.
3. Population To Be Served

POPULATION SERVED
The curriculum will be designed to meet the specific needs of San Benito County students who have basic skills lower than the ninth grade level. These students will then go on to higher levels of education through the GED program, precollegiate level courses at Gavilan College's main campus, or employment training through the county's JTPA or GAIN Programs.
4. Objectives

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITY DATES & BUDGET AMOUNTS

A. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. Objective #1 - (Relates to Need #1)
   To create a consistent, comprehensive basic skills curriculum with reading, writing and math components which will raise students basic skill levels to at least ninth grade level.

2. Objective #2 - (Relates to Need #1)
   To create a curriculum which will increase the likelihood of success for San Benito County students in further educational pursuits.

3. Objective #3 - (Relates to Need #2)
   To design a curriculum which will increase the level of basic education of San Benito County students, thereby increasing their employability and reducing the number of people on the unemployment rolls.

4. Objective #4 - (Relates to Need #3)
   To construct an educational program which will provide students with the basis for further education or employment training, thereby raising the standard of living of those who are now economically disadvantaged.

5. Objective #5 - (Relates to Need #4)
   To develop a cohesive, inter-disciplinary curriculum, encompassing reading, writing and math, based on the specific needs of San Benito County students.
5. Workplan Narrative

ACTIVITY DATES

BUDGET (See also Proposal Budget Summary Sheet and Proposal Budget Detail)

1. Employment of Basic Skills Instructor/Project Director for re-design and development of curriculum
   $5,407.00

2. Employment of Basic Skills Instructor for re-design and development of curriculum
   $3,639.00

3. Instructional Supplies to support classes
   $100.00

4. Travel to visit other centers
   $100.00

PROJECT TOTAL: $9,246.00

ACTIVITIES

1. Research, gather and classify materials appropriate for the intended curriculum in the three content areas.
   a. Order and preview appropriate materials from adult education publishers for possible inclusion into the curriculum.
   b. Investigate existing basic skills curricula at other institutions for possible inclusion in project curriculum.

2. Create and type exercises, tests and answer keys for inclusion in the curriculum.

3. Preview and classify computer software to determine feasibility of inclusion into basic skills curriculum.

4. Develop lesson plans based on student population's needs consistent with objectives of the project.

5. Coordinate acquired materials into a cohesive, comprehensive curriculum available for use beginning September, 1990, at the Hollister Basic Skills Center.
6. Expected Outcomes

EXPECTED IMPACT

1. It is expected that, within the activity dates, the objectives of the project will be achieved. It is expected that a complete, comprehensive, Interdisciplinary basic skills curriculum will be completed and available for implementation in September, 1990.

2. In terms of the eventual impact and potential for continued support after the expiration of the grant, this curriculum, once in place at the basic skills center, will be available for use by any Instructor assigned to the center. This will ensure that San Benito County students will have a program designed for their particular needs. The curriculum will remain in place, even though the staff and instructors may change. This will ensure continuity in the approach to the problems as outlined in Section I of the proposal narrative.
7. Evaluation Plan

EVALUATION PLAN

1. Students who enter the basic skills center will be pre-tested with standardized tests in math and reading and samples of writing will be taken to determine grade level equivalencies prior to exposure to the curriculum. Students will be post-tested using the same methods after completion of the curriculum.

2. The proposed curriculum will be evaluated by determining the number of successful completions of the curriculum as compared to the number of completions of the existing curriculum.

3. The proposed curriculum will be evaluated by determining the number of students who complete the program and go on to further education or employment training.
8. Dissemination Plan

DISSEMINATION AND TRANSFERABILITY

1. The proposed curriculum will be ready for implementation at the Basic Skills Center in Hollister in September, 1990.

2. The proposed curriculum, once evaluated at the center, will be available for use on the main Gavilan College campus. Dissemination will be limited to Gavilan College, the only college within the district, in accordance with the stipulations on the FII for small grants. (page 9 of FII Proposal RFP).

3. The project director will draft a report at the conclusion of the project outlining the project in terms of objectives achieved and overall impact.
9. Budget Narrative

[NO “BUDGET NARRATIVE” ACCOMPANIES THIS DOCUMENT.]