CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES
AND
LOS ANGELES
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

#90-0013
## Preparing Faculty for Increased Student Success

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<th>FISCAL YEAR</th>
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<td>1990-91</td>
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**PROJECT TITLE**

Preparation Faculty for Increased Student Success

**FUNDING CATEGORY & AWARD**

Grant = $14,600

**ELIGIBLE PROGRAM**

B --- Improving Teaching Ability

**PROJECT CATEGORY**

Developmental Model

**PROJECT PRODUCT**

Resource Materials

**PROJECT TOPIC #1**

Faculty/Staff Develop

**PROJECT TOPIC #2**

Inter-Disciplinary

**ACADEMIC SUBJECT**

**PROJECT DIRECTOR**

Bonnie Easley, Dir Learning Assistance Center

**PROJECT SUPERVISOR**

Chris O'Hearn, Dean Academic Affairs

**PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of this project is to provide released time for one semester for 5 instructors to be trained in the Collaborative/Cooperative teaching methodology. They will also develop materials in 5 different disciplines which would then be shared (methods & materials) with other teachers in our District & across the state. This methodology is known to be successful with minorities & other high risk & underprepared students who have not done well in traditional classroom settings. Proponents of this methodology have demonstrated a reversal of the downward & destructive spiral with students unable to succeed in the fixed & inflexible lecture environment.
Enrollment in Community Colleges by underprepared and high risk students has been steadily increasing and no change in this trend seems to be on the horizon. At the same time, we have been experiencing high attrition rates in our classes with this segment of the population. One reason is their inability to absorb & respond to the traditional lecture method of teaching. By developing new teaching methods for classroom presentation & student interaction, we will assist & directly address the educational needs of the underprepared & high risk student, & be able to retain them until they’ve reached their educational goals. Faculty will enjoy renewed interest in the educational/learning process. They will also be challenged, rewarded & satisfied to provide an inviting & stimulating environment for student learning.

The purpose of this project, then, is to provide released time for one semester for 5 instructors to be trained in the Collaborative/Cooperative teaching methodology. They will also develop materials in 5 different disciplines which would then be shared (methods & materials) with other teachers in our District & across the state. This methodology is known to be successful with minorities & other high risk & underprepared students who have not done well in traditional classroom settings. Proponents of this methodology have demonstrated a reversal of the downward & destructive spiral with students unable to succeed in the fixed & inflexible lecture environment.

In the second semester, these 5 instructors will put the methodology into practice with their classes of high risk & underprepared students (as identified by incoming assessment scores). We will then compare past student & class performance, attrition levels, & grade distribution to see if more students having been taught with this method are being retained & if there’s a marked decrease in the numbers of D’s, F’s & W’s. Faculty growth and satisfaction will also be measured.
Preparing Faculty for Increased Student Success

1. Specific Educational Program Being Addressed

[NO “PROGRAM” ACCOMPANIES THIS DOCUMENT.]
2. Specific Problems Being Addressed

PROBLEM STATEMENT & POPULATION SERVED
More and more people are entering college today and community college enrollment constitutes more than 35% of the state's college student population. Whether from a need to better their economic earning position, or from a desire to learn more of the world in which we live, the majority who enroll in community colleges are severely underprepared. As an example, in the Fall, 1989, of the 2800 students assessed for placement in English and Math at Harbor College, 2/3 scored below acceptable writing and reading levels. In addition, 75% scored poorly on a study skills assessment indicating their "unreadiness" for college. We would term these students as "high risk" or underprepared students--students who, without some form of intervention, usually do not succeed or even complete their first term of college. Moreover, we are facing rampant and rising attrition rates (as high as 60% in many courses). We see the same students enrolling and dropping out of the same classes semester by semester. Hence, our community college classrooms are consistently being filled with 60-70% of students who are underprepared and are dropping out because they cannot follow the lecture or instruction in English, or because they are not prepared for any instruction on a college level. We need to find new ways to help these high risk and underprepared students succeed.

Harbor College intends to prepare its faculty to change their teaching methods to better serve the high risk and underprepared student population. Since AB 1173 has created a fund to improve instructional programs (content, method and delivery) to address the special learning needs of the educationally disadvantaged students, this proposal requests assistance from the Fund for Instructional Improvement to improve the teaching abilities of 5 Harbor College instructors towards this end.

Our effort actually began when a 2 day Collaborative Learning Workshop was presented on the campus in the Fall of 1989. It was attended by 25 faculty and counselors from a wide variety of disciplines (Math, English, Speech, Biology, Chemistry, Electronics, Special Ed., Political Science, Spanish, Business, Computers & Data Process., Personal Development, Geography, Physical Education, Health, Family & Consumer Science, Nursing, Psychology, etc.) The focus of the workshop was to show interested and motivated faculty a new method of addressing our retention dilemma. (See Appendix A)

The Collaborative/Cooperative Learning method of instructional techniques was introduced. When implemented, this method requires students to work together in small, fixed groups on structured learning tasks. Students will take responsibility for helping other members of the group to grasp the content of the lesson and share in any output. It takes away competitiveness from grading and classroom activities and emphasizes cooperation and team work (which is the most common method or approach to problem solving used in the work place today). This methodology is becoming part of graduate programs in teacher education because of its success and potential. (See Appendix B) However, most current community college faculty
have been teaching for many years and are not inclined to return to college themselves to learn
this (or any) new methodology. Since these experienced teachers still have 10-15 years (or
more) of teaching ahead of them, it is critical that we train our existing faculty in order to
address the unique disadvantage of what is becoming the majority of our enrollees.

Many of these experienced faculty are facing "burn-out." By learning this method they will enjoy
renewed interest in the educational/learning process and in communicating their discipline
with enthusiasm. They will use critical thinking and problem solving skills to learn of their
students individual learning styles and how to help them. The challenge of interacting with
students on a more individual basis is not only rewarding and satisfying for the teacher but
provides an inviting and stimulating environment for student learning.

Much of the educational reform legislation in the State of California, has stated that the
Community College will take the student in their "present educational situation" and assist
them in achieving their educational goals--with an educational plan in a timely manner. I submit
to you that the high risk and underprepared student will not meet these stated goals without
some form of intervention. Matriculation addresses many of the student service needs, but we
intend to address the issue of success in the classroom.
3. Population To Be Served

[SEE “PROBLEMS” SECTION OF THIS DOCUMENT.]
4. Objectives

OBJECTIVES

With a minority enrollment of 55%—many of whom are ESL and foreign students, high risk and underprepared as evidenced by their incoming assessment scores—Harbor College’s focus for this project is the training and continued support of experienced faculty members seeking to change their method of delivery in the classroom.

The Objectives of the project are:

1. to change teacher delivery methods from straight lecture to more student centered learning methods;

2. to increase student retention in the teacher trained method courses by 20%;

3. to decrease by 50% in the teacher trained method courses, grades of D, F, and W;

4. to increase by 20% student knowledge and practice of cooperation and teamwork in the classroom as measured by a pre-post student survey; and

5. to share with and present the results of the model (approach, practices, materials, etc.) with other faculty at Harbor and within our District, and at State-wide conferences.
5. Workplan Narrative

ACTIVITIES
A core of 5 faculty have been identified as having a majority of high risk and underprepared students in their classes. Having already been introduced to the method through the Workshop, they are highly motivated to continue working on this project to meet the above objectives. For one semester, they will have 1/5 released time to receive additional instruction/training from the Project Director (Director of the Learning Assistance Center). Together, the teachers and Project Director will plan step by step how to integrate the changes into their individual disciplines' curricula. They will experience how to break students into groups, prepare assignments and challenge the groups. Through inter-group dialogues and assignments to develop their critical thinking skills, the students will also learn study skills pertaining not only to the specific course, but to be able to use these skills in other disciplines as well. They will learn how individual learning styles can be ascertained through surveys, inventories and individual student conferences. Video taping will be used to critique style.

Content specific materials will be developed in each discipline area for future training of additional faculty. The target date to begin implementing the new method will be Spring 1991. Ongoing bi-monthly meetings for support, critiquing additional materials, and changes or adjustments will continue through the duration of the project. The Project Director will, during the first few weeks of the semester, attend all classes and present study skills lessons which will include how to read and effectively use text-book, how to take notes and integrate them with the text-book, and how to use both to prepare for tests and how to take tests. As the semester progresses, the director will attend as many of the classes as possible and critique and assist the participating instructors as problems, questions, and issues arise, (See Activities Chart for further elaboration)
6. Expected Outcomes

EXPECTED IMPACT

The impact of the project could have significant and far-reaching effects. In our District alone, we serve 110,000 students the majority of whom are high risk and underprepared. A core of 5 well trained teachers with good materials could challenge others to change their method of instruction to better serve this disadvantaged student population. (See Appendix C) During and at the end of the Spring semester, the beneficiary of these techniques - the high risk and underprepared students - will:

- stay in their classes and not drop out;
- learn study skills and other writing, reading and organizational techniques that can cross over to other disciplines;
- keep up with the lessons through group assistance and active participation;
- develop meta-cognitive functions and critical thinking skills which will serve them in life-long endeavors educationally, professionally and personally.

The 5 instructors will also benefit by:

- greater satisfaction with student participation and retention;
- using their own critical thinking and problem solving skills to determine learning styles and other learning needs of individual students; and
- gaining renewed confidence as an educator.
7. Evaluation Plan

EVALUATION
Evaluation of the success of the methodology will be made in 3 areas based on:

- comparison of instructor's attrition rate from the Spring 1990 semester not utilizing the method and the Spring 1991 semester after having implemented the method;

- comparison of grade distributions of instructor (i.e. numbers of D's, F's, and Withdrawals) from Spring 1990 and after implementation of method in Spring 1991;

- comparison of Pre & Post Tests (See Appendix D) in the experimental classes and in classes not using the methodology but with similar students (characteristics such as Assessment scores, ethnic background) measuring the increased knowledge of and success with cooperative and/or teamwork approaches to problem solving and critical thinking skills; and

- survey faculty participants to determine success of new methodology and satisfaction with personal and professional growth.
8. Dissemination Plan

DISSEMINATION & TRANSFERABILITY

After the data is collected, a report will be compiled. Presentations will be made by the 5 trained faculty to their respective Divisions and to other colleges in our District via Discipline Council meetings. The Project Director will make presentations at the Planning and Advisement Committee meeting at the District and at a subsequent LACCD Board of Trustees meeting, and at various statewide organizations such as ACCCTLA, CCCAOE, LARC and any others as appropriate. In addition to the results of the project, teaching materials, grouping strategies, and other pertinent information will be made available. Whenever possible, the training (critiquing) videos would be shown to emphasize certain techniques.

The materials developed through the project could easily be utilized by any educational institution to initiate a similar program.
9. Budget Narrative

[NO “BUDGET NARRATIVE” ACCOMPANIES THIS DOCUMENT.]