CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES
AND
SOUTHWESTERN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

#90-0030
The Instructional Improvement Lab was designed to produce representative teaching presentations by faculty. These videos are used in classroom research, as a component of the peer evaluation process, and to identify teaching strategies and methods best suited to meeting the needs of educationally disadvantaged students, particularly those with limited English proficiency.
Southwestern Community College District

**Instructional Improvement Lab: Communication Skills**

**GOAL:** To match instructor teaching styles with students' learning styles through the use of staff development services provided through an Instructional Improvement lab.

**ABSTRACT:** The implementation of an Instructional Improvement Lab is proposed whereby representative teaching presentations by faculty could be videotaped and critiqued by trained evaluators, speech communication instructors. Such an approach could be used as a component in the newly mandated AB1725 Peer Evaluation process on campus.

The evaluative focus would be on strategies to improve student learning. Thus attention could be given to improved lecture techniques, use of cooperative learning groups, and interactive communication processes in the classroom.

Secondly, the College Development Office would commit matching project funds for classroom Research Projects. Selected instructional techniques could be identified, modeled, videotaped and disseminated to interested faculty and discipline groups. Again, the focus would be on identifying strategies which best meet the needs of Southwestern College students. It should be noted that the college is currently involved in a project which focuses on Teacher/Student Learning Styles and on developing specialized learning style assessment. The proposed Fund for Instructional Improvement project would build upon this project by establishing an Instructional Improvement Lab. Here new instructional strategies which address diverse student learning modalities can be learned, practiced, refined and modeled through a videotaping process which provides immediate feedback to the teachers interested in acquiring new skills.

Finally, the project would focus specifically on identifying teaching strategies and methods best suited to meeting the needs of the educationally disadvantaged students, particularly Limited English Proficient who have unique learning requirements.
Southwestern Community College District

Instructional Improvement Lab: Communication Skills

1. Specific Educational Program Being Addressed

Educational Program or Services Addressed.

Purpose of the project in relation to the funding areas authorized by AB1173, AB1725 and the 1989-90 Basic Agenda.

The purpose of this project as related to the AB1173 funding priorities is to improve the teaching abilities of faculty members at Southwestern College and as a result enhance the quality of traditional instructional programs. This would be accomplished through the establishment of an Instructional Improvement Lab Program whereby faculty would participate in a structured series of staff development activities designed to raise awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses as classroom teachers and identify alternative instructional methods. Inasmuch as traditional teaching methods (i.e., lecture) prevail in many disciplines, it is anticipated that a faculty-centered process of instructional evaluation and improvement would promote the development of new learning techniques which focus on students’ learning styles as well as improve the use of established methods.

The focus of the project would be on identifying strategies which best meet the needs of Southwestern College students—namely, significant numbers of first generation college students including limited English proficient students. Such a focus would address the AB1173 funding priority of meeting the learning needs of educationally disadvantaged students. One major project component is the development of teaching strategies designed to meet the needs of the college bilingual population. While the college provides a quality comprehensive English-as-a-Second Language program, it is also crucial that mainstream academic and vocational programs be responsive to the needs of this nontraditional population. This project would promote faculty sensitivity to the learning needs of LEP students and promote the development of specific teaching skills tailored to these needs. The Board of Governors 1989-90 Basic agenda priority on E.S.L./Basic Skills is thus also addressed by this project.
2. Specific Problems Being Addressed

Specific Problems Being Addressed In The Proposal.

The need exists to provide Southwestern College faculty with options and staff development activities to improve their classroom teaching. While workshops, conferences and college staff development activities can motivate and serve as sources of information on teaching approaches, instructional materials and methods, the lack of follow-up support services and opportunities for faculty to learn, practice and refine alternative teaching behaviors on an individual basis frequently inhibits long-term change and improvement.

The proposed project would provide an Instructional Improvement Lab facility and the much needed peer support services to address this need. The main focus of the Instructional Improvement Lab program would be on developing strategies to improve student learning at Southwestern. Attention would be given to improving lecture techniques, use of cooperative learning groups, and interactive communication processes in the classroom. Over the past few years, efforts have been made through special projects and staff development activities to promote the knowledge and use of Learning Style theory in the classroom. This project would further facilitate faculty use of diverse teaching strategies to match students' diverse learning styles.

Another major problem which would be addressed by this project would be the need to provide specific instructional support to the growing numbers of bilingual and LEP students at Southwestern. While the college provides a comprehensive E.S.L. program, students who exit this program or who simply may not be native English speakers still require specialized instructional support strategies to ensure their success in the classroom. The college Speech department has for years provided "bilingual" sections of college level Speech courses wherein such instructional support strategies are used. These courses are not bilingual—that is, two languages are not employed; rather, instructors, sensitive to the needs of bilingual students, purposefully employ strategies which facilitate student performance in the classroom. Such methods include, but are not limited to aspects of speech delivery (pace, diction), explicit definition of terms, teaching vocabulary, and other classroom management tips. This project would disseminate such proven methods to other disciplines as well as build upon these by identifying other techniques appropriate to different discipline areas.

In summary, the project would address the above mentioned need areas through the following objectives:

1. Implement an Instructional Improvement Lab to provide support for development of more effective teaching methods and strategies by faculty.
2. Provide peer evaluation services to faculty through a program of videotaping/critique (an AB1725 peer evaluation option).
3. Develop a resource library of tapes on exemplary teaching methods, activities and strategies which address Southwestern College student learning styles (in conjunction with Instructional Skills Library sources).

4. Identify and record on videotape teaching methods and strategies which focus on the needs of bilingual and/or Limited English Proficient (LEP) students.
3. Population To Be Served

Population Served.

This project is designed to serve both the general student population and the specific non-traditional LEP/bilingual subgroup in the population. The primary focus will be on day students (63% of enrollments). Most tenured faculty who make up the project participants teach mostly day sections.

It should be noted that the College draws from a service area which is well over fifty percent ethnic "minority" (New Majority). Total minority enrollments stand at 63% college-wide; 37% are Hispanic out of a total college population of approximately 15,000.

In terms of educational needs, a major characteristic of the college population is the predominance of many first-generation college students. This population requires "socialization" into higher education and explicit college success guidance. It is most frequently the classroom instructor who must act as the support professional, the "mentor". This project will focus on promoting enhanced instructional staff skills which will better serve the educational needs of our college population.

Secondly, the project component related to serving LEP/bilingual students is designed to reach the E.S.L. students who make up the 900 plus enrollments in the E.S.L. program. These students will be mainstreaming into college academic/vocational programs, and appropriate teaching strategies are required to assist their successful transition. College data also indicate 1000 plus students who are not native English speakers (but do not require E.S.L.). These students would also benefit from positive classroom environments purposefully created by faculty attuned to the needs of non-native English speakers.

The College tenured faculty totals 189; adjunct faculty total 380. Approximately 25% of full-time staff are of ethnic minority backgrounds. One notable demographic factor is that over the next 3 years, 23% of the contract faculty has confirmed retirement plans. It is of particular importance at this point to develop an Instructional Improvement Lab which will assist new faculty in the development of teaching skills proven effective for our college population. This staff development project will primarily involve faculty. Although students will participate directly in class videos, student surveys and evaluative feedback.
4. Objectives

[SEE “WORKPLAN” SECTION IN THIS DOCUMENT.]
5. Workplan Narrative

Work Statement.

The project work plan/matrix on the following pages describe in sequence how the project will be conducted and describes the following:

- Project objectives,
- Scheduled activities,
- Target dates/timelines for activities,
- Personnel required,
- Budget by objectives.

Immediately following, the project evaluation method will be detailed.

Evaluation Process.

Objective 1: Implementation of Instructional Improvement Lab.

ACTIVITY:
By the end of the first quarter of the project period, detailed plans, requisitions and work orders will have been completed and submitted.

By October 15, the lab will be in operation as demonstrated by faculty use.

Finalized project procedures for faculty videotaping, viewing and conferencing will be completed in writing and will be on file with Project Co-coordinators, Division Dean and project office.

Objective 2: Provision of peer evaluation services through Instructional Lab.

ACTIVITY:
Project critique form will be completed and in use by October 15, 1990.

A completed schedule of Instructional Lab Hours will be publicized through College Staff Development Office.

A comprehensive project log of videotaping sessions and conferences will be maintained by project faculty in conjunction with project assistant.
Objective 3:  Resource library of exemplary demonstration tapes.

   ACTIVITY:
   A complete catalog of demonstration tapes on teaching activities will be on file in the college Learning Resource Center and regularly updated and disseminated (quarterly) to Division Offices.
   - Humanities and Fine Arts
   - Business - Math/Sciences
   - Communication Arts
   - Applied Sciences

Objective 4:  Resource library of demonstration tapes focusing on strategies for LEP/bilingual students.

   ACTIVITY:
   The completed list of identified methods will be disseminated to all teaching faculty.

   A completed catalog of demonstration tapes focusing on identified strategies will be on file in College Resource Center and in Division Offices.
6. Expected Outcomes

Expected Outcomes.

A/B. Anticipated Project Impact.

The obvious direct outcome of the project is anticipated to be improvement of instruction by participating faculty in all curriculum areas. As described in Section one, traditional teaching methods frequently prevail (i.e., lecture). This project would provide individualized assistance to faculty to assess personal strengths and weaknesses in the classroom and to identify and establish improvement goals. The project would also heighten awareness and understanding of student needs--both of traditional and non-traditional students enrolled at the college (LEP/bilingual).

Speech faculty member, Jerry Anderson, noted: "I believe that seeing [their own classroom presentations] and hearing criticisms of their speech patterns, organization and delivery from a faculty peer will re-awaken in many the knowledge that students, too, observe these difficulties... The student will reap the greatest benefits from an instructor who is communicative, sensitive to their needs, and confident in his own abilities.

Another major outcome will be the establishment of a resource library which will make available videotape demonstrations of exemplary teaching methods and behaviors. Too often, faculty learn or read about innovative and effective teaching methods in the abstract; this project will allow faculty to directly observe, learn, model and practice those methods.

Finally, the unique instructional needs of the college LEP and bilingual populations will be identified and analyzed by teaching faculty through project activities. Enhanced sensitivity, awareness and knowledge of effective approaches will hopefully result.

C. Continued Support After Project End.

The College is making a permanent commitment to this project through the establishment of an Instructional Improvement Lab facility. It is anticipated that hours will be set aside on an on-going basis for videotaping critique and demonstration.

Because this peer evaluation activity will be made a regular option for instructional peer evaluation and improvement under the AB725 college procedures, it is anticipated that demand and use of evaluation services will continue and grow beyond the immediate project period. The lab will be a permanent instructional resource. Peer evaluators, trained in the use of the critique forms and conferencing procedures will also continue as part of the peer evaluation alternatives. This project will provide the means for initial establishment and program development, but the service will be institutionalized beyond the project period.
Finally, on-going technical support and service will be provided through the regular Learning Resource Center staff. Instructional Divisions will easily be able to fund minimal supply needs (blank tapes) through regular operational budgets. D/F.

Adaptation Of Project By Other Institutions And Dissemination Plan

The use of videotaping techniques, particularly in Speech Communication programs, is an increasingly prevalent approach (Cerritos, etc.). The likelihood is high, therefore, for the adoption of this proposed Instructional Improvement Lab program. Even without the specialized facility (optimal as it is), aspects of the project such as peer evaluation, presentation critiques, and teaching/learning style analysis can be easily replicated. Colleges with significant LEP/bilingual populations (an ever growing number in the state) will be able to make use of the project results related to effective communication approaches to meet the needs of this group. Two colleges in San Diego County alone, San Diego City College and Palomar College have similar student clienteles. Instructional Divisions at City College have already demonstrated interest in project results.
7. Evaluation Plan

Evaluation Plan.

A major responsibility of the cognizant college administrator for the project, the Division Dean for Communication Arts, and the College Development Office will be the design and implementation of evaluation measures for all project objectives. Formative evaluations will take place all along the sequence of activities leading to the full implementation of an Instructional Improvement Lab. Summative evaluation will be accomplished to assess outcomes and continuation.

Evaluation procedures will include a variety of techniques ranging from judging face validity of program objectives (ie, have these been accomplished?) to identification of appropriate data elements (faculty assessment instruments). Discrepancy analysis will be a basic technique used to analyze consistency between the expected and actual outcomes of the project. In this regard, actual observation of the program will be compared with projected outcomes as specified by the program objectives.

Specific evaluation measures include but are not limited to the following:

1. Qualitative
   Self evaluation instruments completed by participating faculty to assess benefit of peer evaluation/videotape feedback.

   Evaluator assessment of individual faculty improvement through follow-up presentations.

2. Quantitative
   Amount of participation. During the project year, an average of three instructors per week (9 hours of service) will avail themselves of the services. This constitutes the key performance measure.

   Of participating faculty, it is anticipated that 70% will positively assess the project services as recorded on project evaluation instruments.

3. Quarterly Speech faculty/project staff meetings to discuss activities, outcomes, revision timelines, etc.
8. Dissemination Plan

DISSEMINATION

The College is committed to disseminating project results to county Colleges as well as to other Community Colleges in the State through established Chancellor Office network (Academic Standard unit and appropriate Advisory Task Forces). Our own college staff--faculty and administrative--is active in other professional organizations such as the Latina Network, C.A.C.C., A.C.C.C.A., and L.A.R.C. Dissemination is highly probable through these channels. The College will also actively participate in resource sharing activities established by the Chancellor's Office for dissemination of results from Fund for Instructional Improvement Projects.
9. Budget Narrative

[NO “BUDGET NARRATIVE” ACCOMPANIES THIS DOCUMENT.]
Educational Program or Services Addressed.

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