CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES
AND
LOS ANGELES
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

#92-0012
This proposal is a grant request. This program seeks to improve classroom learning and improve the retention and success of underprepared and underrepresented students. Harbor College serves a student body of 9600 with a 61% ethnic minority population. A recent study of students placement into basic skills level classes revealed that many students were not following recommended placements and were dropping out of classes and out of college. We believe that underprepared students drop out largely due to a lack of academic support. It is our proposal to collaborate with CSU, Dominguez Hills to prepare these students for college success by enrolling them in supplemental instruction classes—companion classes to specific target classes—taught by student interns from CSU,DH.

The benefits for students participating in the program are: increased knowledge and preparation for the target course, peer-support through small group interaction, self-awareness in learning styles preference, development of skills to address learning and memory preferences, self-esteem as the student is successful in target courses, and development of critical thinking and writing skills.

This is a consortium project.
Academic Improvement for the Underprepared Students

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We believe that underprepared students drop out largely due to a lack of academic support. It is our proposal to collaborate with Calif. State Univ. at Dominguez Hills to prepare these students for college success by enrolling them in supplemental instruction classes—companion classes to specific target classes—taught by student interns from CSUDH. The interns would meet these underprepared students an additional two hours every week for review, discussion, clarification and explanation of the lecture, lessons and problems presented in the target class(es). A direct link with the mentor faculty would provide the interns with their lessons and tutors from Harbor would augment the classes so that the students would have maximum attention. The benefits for students participating in the program are: increased knowledge and preparation for the target course; peer-support through small group interaction, self-awareness in learning styles preference, development of skills to address learning and memory preferences, self-esteem as the student is successful in target courses, and development of critical thinking and writing skills.

The program objectives are to increase completion rate in the target classes to 75%, develop practical course survival skills, and develop personal skills for self confidence. This will be measured by course grades, increase in skills development and gains in self-esteem by pre/post testing (instruments currently under consideration).

This program is clearly exportable. It expands the notion of group tutorials and incorporates it into the curriculum in a method that could be available to any of the state's community colleges. And, the Board of Governors recently added the intern regulations of AB 1725 to the Ed. Code which should facilitate the development of like programs.

Dissemination will include presentations to State and National Organizations of Learning Assistance and Tutorial associations. Information will also be submitted to Newsletters and the Staff Development coordinators state-wide (for possible workshops). Locally, the information will be shared with the other 8 colleges in the L.A. District—serving 110,000 students annually. Findings will also be distributed throughout the State's Chief Instructional Officer's Council.
Total cost of the project is $22,747 of which $14,988 is requested from the Fund for Instructional Improvement.
Academic Improvement for the Underprepared Students

1. Specific Educational Program Being Addressed

Eligible Programs and Services

Many of our institutions of higher education have been more concerned with the content of particular courses rather than the delivery or method used to convey the information. As the preparedness of our students appears to be slipping farther below the "college" level, we need to address such issues as how to serve this population without watering down the content of our courses. Supplemental or adjunct instruction is a way of strengthening traditional instruction with non-traditional techniques and serving the special learning needs of educationally disadvantaged students--the underprepared student,--and often, the underrepresented student. We propose to utilize interns from California State University at Dominguez Hills to augment our traditional basic English and Math courses with supplemental instruction of the credit/no-credit variety. In addition to giving the students in the target English and Math courses extra help (clarification, pre-testing, drill), the students will also receive assistance in study skills, and how to address their own personal learning style preference. Hence, their performance in the target courses (and, in other courses) will improve substantially.

Board of Governors Basic Agenda Priorities Focus

Additionally, this proposal seeks to raise the numbers of students (both underprepared and underrepresented) transferring to four year institutions. By attending to this population's academic disadvantage, we will improve their retention rate. And, by introducing this population to counseling (and other student services), and assisting them in developing their own SEP's early on, we believe they will be more goal-oriented and committed to achieving their educational plan.
2. Specific Problems Being Addressed

PROBLEM AND POPULATION SERVED

One of the most significant problems facing students in the community college system (statewide) is their lack of preparedness. And, perhaps even more significantly, this seems to impact the underrepresented student in even greater numbers.

Both underrepresented and underprepared students are the nucleus of our Drop-In/Drop-Out population which has earned California educational institutions the sobriquet "revolving-door." We have begun to address aspects of accessibility and entry to our colleges but with the exception of spotty or occasional projects, we have failed miserably to develop programs specifically aimed at academic support.

At Harbor College, since 1989, 2500 students of the 4500 Non-ESL students tested (nearly 60%), placed into basic English and Math courses--those fundamental courses which should enable students to develop necessary skills to be successful at the college level. A random sample of these students indicated that 42% were no longer enrolled after their 1st semester. Simply put, we lost them. Granted, they drop out for many reasons: work, family, moving, personal, etc. But many drop out because the material is far too difficult for them or because the classes move too fast. The rate of completion in these basic skills courses was an average of 35% over the last 4 semesters. Exit (or withdrawal) questionnaires reveal that those who withdrew for academic reasons think highly of the college and the faculty, and would return in the future. Hence, our "revolving" student--in and out.

One of the key services that can make a substantial difference in cases like these is instructional assistance. Tutorial programs have been utilized in the past but only reach a small segment of these populations. Either the students wait too long and are too far behind before seeking help, or they really don't have the preparatory skills to respond to tutoring. Another approach is supplemental instruction whereby a special section or paired offering of a particular class is offered to expand, drill and provide more individual attention to the underprepared learner. Harbor College has been experimenting with group tutorials using a similar approach with a high degree of success. As compared with previous semesters of one-on-one tutoring, the group tutorials, led by a tutor that was specially identified from the target class, demonstrated a marked increase in student retention and successful course completion (often with higher grades than was first anticipated). Comments from student's that were interviewed indicated they (the tutees) felt supported by other members of the group, in addition to the tutor, and that they learned more by discussion techniques, and felt more confident as they returned to their class(es) knowing they and their "tutor-mates" were "in" it together.

Supplemental instruction (or adjunct instruction) is not a new concept. Dr. Uri Treisman from Berkeley found that students from educationally disadvantaged situations generally tended to
study alone and often did poorly. He observed that Asian students tended to study (and support each other) in groups and did well in their course work. The Berkeley model, as it has evolved, is open group study sessions set up as organized tutorials. Certain hours are chosen outside of regular class hours and students are invited to come and meet as a group with a tutor (Grad Student, or Teaching Assistant) on a regular basis. The tutors work with the instructors of record and present challenging problems that students work to solve in small groups. The result is that students' proficiency increases and through the discussion process, learning is achieved. Since 1978, students in the workshop program have significantly outperformed other non-workshop students. After adapting the Berkeley model of group tutorials to fit their needs, Laney College reported that these high risk, underprepared and underrepresented students persist at rates that are comparable to the Asian and white students. (Laney College Study Group Program)

Similar experiences have been reported at the University of Missouri, Kansas City. Again, using the format of organized tutorials, the tutors also attend the classes themselves and in the tutorial sessions focus on improving the students' reasoning and critical thinking skills, through a variety of strategies.

Harbor College is proposing to develop an adaptation of the two models utilizing a community college intern program at California State University at Dominguez Hills (See Exhibit A - CSUDH Certificate Program) With an instructor of record assigned to each intern (as per Board of Governors' Regulations, Exhibit B), an adjunct or supplemental 2 hours a week will be offered for Basic English (2 levels below English 1) and Basic Math or Pre-Algebra in both day and evening sections. We will offer the classes in the Fall of 1992 and Spring of 1993. The College will also provide tutors to work with the interns. Prior to the start of each semester, the interns and tutors will be trained (See Appendix A). Both formative and summative evaluations will be used. (See Appendix B, C C & D)
3. Population To Be Served

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

PROPOSAL Objectives

As a result of participating in the supplemental classes:

1. 75% of the students will pass the target courses with a grade of "C" or better at the end of both the Fall '92 and Spring '93 semesters;
2. Students will demonstrate a 20% increase in the application and use at least four study strategies: Note-Taking, Test-Preparation and Test Taking, and Problem Solving as measured by teacher diagnostic sample and assessment, and student satisfaction at the end of each semester;
3. 75% of the enrolled students will meet with a counselor and develop their own personal SEP (Student Educational Plan);
4. 50% of the students will gain in self-esteem and self-confidence through group activities and active learning techniques as measured by using the SEI (Self-Esteem Inventory) - or a comparable instrument.

Additionally, we will be collecting information and statistical data on these underprepared students to see how the experience helps them in terms of:

1. Retention and success (in subsequent courses);
2. Completion of a degree or certificate;
3. Transfer to a 4 year college or university.

We may also find that we will need to make recommendations for curricula revision. If, in fact, our findings confirm increased success and retention rate for the underprepared learner, then clearly, we will continue the program.
5. Workplan Narrative

WORK STATEMENT

The Supplemental Instruction Program at Harbor College will consist of directed study groups designed to:
- further clarify and explain lessons from target courses
- teach learning strategies and techniques which will assist students in mastering course concepts
- practice problem solving and critical thinking skills under the guidance of interns and tutors

Skills emphasized will include reading comprehension, critical analysis of material, quantitative reasoning (in math classes), note taking, essay writing (in English classes) and test preparation.

Students enrolling in the SI Courses (special Directed Study sections of English and Math) shall earn two units of Credit/No-Credit for two hours a week, scheduled (as room permits) as closely as possible to the target courses. Students must enroll concurrently in the academic courses for which the supplemental instruction is provided.

The primary purpose of supplemental instruction is to positively impact students' academic success and persistence in the college through the direct application of study strategies, and interactive skills pertaining to the subject matter of the corresponding academic course; thus, they acquire both transferable study skills and review of the specific material for which they are responsible. Additionally, the SI format introduces and emphasizes the value of cooperative learning through the study group mode.

Additional attention will be given to:
- Special learning styles and strategies
- Memory preference
- Counselor participation to develop SEP's (for Matriculation)

An SI session will include some or all of the following:
- Review of lecture notes (from original target course) leader; will present examples of ideal class notes;
- Mock lecture(s) to develop and practice note taking skills;
- Discussion of textbooks and relationship to lectures, integration of lectures and readings, and how to develop questions in anticipation of texts/exams;
- Review course concepts, terms, formulas, etc, and discussion of effective techniques for analyzing and memorizing;
- Practice problems, tasks, tests, using group techniques wherever practical and appropriate.
The SI leaders will be interns from CSUDH enrolled in the community college teaching program. They will attend the classes of the mentor faculty (target courses) for the first few weeks until both the intern and the faculty mentor are comfortable. In addition, the intern will be assisted by tutors selected in advance by the mentor faculty. SI interns will continue to meet regularly with the mentor faculty and continue to attend class if desirable or considered a necessity. (See Responsibilities & Duties of SI Leaders - Appendix E)

SI offerings will be paired with specific courses and instructors. However, any student taking like courses would be eligible to enroll as long as the teaching methods of the mentor faculty and/or the pace or material to be covered was compatible. (See Sample Syllabus, Appendix F)

Students eligible for this Program will be identified in any of the following ways:

1) At the time of Assessment & Orientation (when Placement scores are known)
2) From an early diagnostic in the target course (hence, a recommendation from the teacher of the target course)
3) By counselors from information about:
   - Placement score
   - Probationary status
   - Other factors relating to learning difficulties

* Counselors will be invited to participate on several occasions. Students will be introduced to Career, Vocational & Transfer Programs and Services, and encouraged to meet with a counselor to develop a SEP (Student Educational Plan). When students have a clear understanding of what college is about and have a goal they are committed to, they are more likely to be retained. Therefore, this activity will be included in this project.
6. Expected Outcomes

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Project Objectives

As suggested by the program objectives, we expect a significant increase in course retention for the targeted courses. Learning techniques will also impact retention in other courses in which the students are enrolled. Special consideration will also be given to the development of analytical skills so that students will have more self-confidence in other courses.

Impact of Project

The role of the facilitator, or intern is the key to the success of the program. Training will provide course information and group dynamics, as well as materials and techniques for identifying different learning styles and preferences and the study strategies to address them. Direct links with the faculty mentors and target courses will provide the interns with a sense of continuity between his/her activities and that of the course. This is an excellent opportunity for us to receive the fresh and enthusiastic energy of future community college teachers, and a definite advantage for our underprepared students to benefit from teaching methodologies on the "cutting edge."

Cooperation with the CSUDH intern program will increase the likelihood of better prepared community college teachers for future employment in our own system. It will also develop ties between the faculties of the two institutions as they collaborate on this project.

Potential for Continued Support

This program has met with interest and support Of Harbor's Division Council and if we are successful in preparing and retaining this population, other divisions/departments will be interested for the future. At the end of the project, we would want to evaluate the outcomes and:
- continue the program as it stands;
- modify the program and resume;
- consider possible curricula changes; or
- discontinue the program based on low participation or other factors.

Potential for Adaptation to Other Institutions or Programs

This program is very exportable. Since most of the state's community colleges are in close proximity to one or more of the CSU's, an intern program could be developed if the university was in a position to offer the program. We would want to review the performance and efficacy of the intern program by:
- direct observation by faculty/mentors assigned from CSUDH
- direct observation by faculty/mentors of target courses at Harbor (Appendix C)
- observation by other SI interns (Appendix B)
- evaluation by students enrolled in the SI classes at Mid-term (Appendix D);
- observation and evaluation by project director (LAC coordinator)
7. Evaluation Plan

EVALUATION PLAN

Evaluation of Objectives

At the end of the first semester, we will complete a formative evaluation, reviewing all aspects of the program. Any adjustments will be made in order to meet our objectives. The summative evaluation will include:

Objective 1 - outcome statistics/data on SI enrollees (completions, withdrawals, grades) both in the SI courses and the target courses (i.e., those students in target courses not enrolled in SI);

Objective 2 - ongoing assessment by instructors, interns and tutors to evaluate students application and use of study strategies (based on diagnostic samples and periodic checks);

Objective 3 - end of semester data on numbers of SI enrollees completing individual educational plans (SEP's); and

Objective 4 - pre and post assessment of growth (using an instrument such as the SEI, Self-Esteem Inventory).

As this is a new partnership with another college, we will also review each of the evaluations of the interns (as mentioned in the paragraph above).
DISSEMINATION PLAN

In my capacity as Region 7 Representative to ACCTLA (Assoc. of Community College Tutoring and Learning Assistance), I will be able to make presentations to my area, Southern Region and statewide conference in the Fall of 1992 and 1993. I will also present findings to other learning assistance and academic support organizations as opportunities occur. We will also distribute our findings through the offices and council of the chief instructional officers throughout the state and Staff Development Coordinators (See Exhibit D, a Sample of a previously funded FII Grant on Collaborative Learning).

The impact for the state could be considerable. Heretofore, students have been left on their own to come into learning centers and/or seek tutorial assistance. This appears to be a more organized method of addressing the needs of the underprepared learner particularly since the SI course will include aspects of study skills and critical thinking and problem solving skills to cross over into other classes.

It is clear that the community colleges in the state today are admitting greater numbers of underprepared students and we need to develop additional practical strategies to retain them. This proposal significantly addresses several basic agenda items including ensuring educational quality, improving the system's image, and implementation of AB 1725.
9. Budget Narrative

[NO “BUDGET NARRATIVE” ACCOMPANIES THIS DOCUMENT.]