CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES
AND
SOUTHWESTERN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

#92-0033
This proposal is a grant request. Recently, the impact of campus climate on students, especially underrepresented students, has been given increased attention. Yet little concrete examples of the affects of campus climate on student retention and success have been documented or assessed. Southwestern College (SWC) is dedicated to student success as a central element in its mission and wants to address this problem by implementing a classroom assessment model based on the theories and practices developed by Dr. Cross and T. Angelo. These techniques will be employed to help faculty better identify classroom climate and teaching behaviors that are appropriate to the learning needs of the large underrepresented student population at SWC.

This FII project will focus on identification and utilization of instructional techniques that will support the academic achievement of underrepresented students. The activities required to do this involve the collaboration or a cross section of ten faculty members in eight disciplines to define the common learning problems and needs of targeted students, which are becoming an increasing proportion of the student body served by SWC.
Project CA/RE (Classroom Assessment/Retention Enhancement)

Recently, the impact of campus climate on students, especially underrepresented students, has been given increased attention. Yet little concrete examples of the affects of campus climate on student retention and success have been documented or assessed. Southwestern College (SWC) is dedicated to student success as a central element in its mission and wants to address this problem by implementing a classroom assessment model based on the theories and practices developed by Dr. Cross and T. Angelo. These techniques will be employed to help faculty better identify classroom climate and teaching behaviors that are appropriate to the learning needs of the large underrepresented student population at SWC.

This FII project will include seven objectives: 1) Select ten faculty in eight disciplines to participate in the assessment activities of this project, 2) Utilize the expertise of internal/external consultants to adapt classroom assessment techniques to needs of underrepresented students, 3) Provide intensive inservice to participating faculty, 4) Select course sections and control courses for comparison of baseline research data elements that will be identified to determine impact of classroom assessment techniques, 5) Implement pilot classroom assessment program in experimental and control courses, 6) Collect and analyze data on agreed upon research data elements, and 7) Define and disseminate classroom assessment model for institutionalization by SWC in other disciplines and faculty members through staff development.

This FII project will focus on identification and utilization of instructional techniques that will support the academic achievement of underrepresented students. The activities required to do this involve the collaboration of a cross section of ten faculty members in eight disciplines to define the common learning problems and needs of targeted students, which are becoming an increasing proportion of the student body served by SWC. From the beginning the project is designed to capitalize on internal staff and the use of external experts as resources so that by the end of the project, SWC will be self sufficient in expanding the knowledge and experience gained through FII funding support. The impact of this project on SWC is a major one because of the growing number of students who enter the college under-prepared both academically and in college readiness. The techniques learned by faculty during this project and later expanded to others beyond the time frame of this project is an essential strategy to keep our students in college and on course toward achievement of their educational goals. SWC is committing a high proportion of its resources to the development of this project's interdisciplinary faculty so that they can become the resource cadre of the college in the future.
Results of this project will be disseminated widely throughout SWC and made available to other colleges through presentations at professional meetings during the following year. The total project budget is $25,425 of which $14,725 is being requested from FII and $10,700 42% is being provided by SWC.
1. Specific Educational Program Being Addressed

SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM BEING ADDRESSED:

PROJECT CA/RE will address two of the Eligible Programs and Services:
   b. Programs for improving teaching abilities of faculty members; and
   c. Programs addressing specific learning needs of educationally disadvantaged students.

PROJECT CA/RE will focus on the issue of supporting academic advancement of underrepresented and other students through the implementation of classroom assessment techniques and the development of corresponding teaching and support strategies.

Because a key goal of the development of this model is to develop an interdisciplinary initiative, faculty from the following areas will be key participants:
   - Sociology
   - History
   - English
   - Mathematics
   - Computer Science
   - Engineering
   - Biology
   - Philosophy

By training faculty from these assessment techniques adapted to student and involving them in the adapted to those students, PROJECT applicable for general education, sciences, and vocational education diverse disciplines in classroom the needs of the underrepresented development of teaching strategies CA/RE will develop and test a model basic skills, humanities, applied disciplines.
2. Specific Problems Being Addressed

WHAT PROBLEMS ARE BEING ADDRESSED:

The issue of classroom behaviors by teachers and their impact on the learning process has begun to receive long overdue attention. Teachers control the classroom climate. They determine the pace and direction of information flow between faculty and students and student-to-student. They determine the level of support (or lack thereof) that will be extended each student.

At most California community colleges, large percentages of faculty have been teaching for a decade or more. Yet over that decade, the nature of our student population has changed. As with the California population in general, student enrollment has increased overall, and the percentage of underrepresented students has increased even more dramatically. At Southwestern College, 60% of the total student population is comprised by the underrepresented. Yet, few faculty have had the opportunity to learn innovative and sensitive assessment and teaching techniques to effectively serve this diverse student body.

Though recent literature has identified the benefits of classroom assessment, there have been few opportunities for faculty training in the techniques and few professional resources providing access to the results of this work. As a result, potential benefits of classroom assessment, especially for the underrepresented student, remain largely undiscovered. Though faculty generally acknowledge that underrepresented students often have need for diverse teaching modalities and specific support interventions, few faculty have access to the training, models, and resources to assess and modify their teaching behaviors and classroom climates.

PROJECT CA/RE ADDRESSES THIS SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL ISSUE.

Southwestern College has emerged as a leader in the California community colleges in examination of the needs of the underrepresented student. During 1991-92, Southwestern College has taken specific steps to become a leader in investigating the complex issues of classroom assessment techniques, strategies for adapting teaching behaviors, and the resulting impact on the outcomes of student success.

Southwestern College is one of thirty California community colleges to participate in the FIPSE-funded LARC (Learning, Assessment, Retention Consortium) Classroom Based Research Project. A basic function of the project is to begin the process of identifying and implementing classroom assessment techniques, identifying behavioral modality strategies, and developing teacher training opportunities for those faculty interested in enhancing classroom climate for the benefit of their students. As a result of this participation, the college has already identified classroom assessment techniques outlined in Cross (1987) pertinent to our district and trained twelve (12) faculty in their use. We have, as well, identified the base line
data needed to measure the impact of the model developed through the proposed PROJECT CA/RE.

PROJECT CA/RE will build upon the FIPSE LARC effort and develop a classroom assessment and teaching behavior model with specific applicability to classrooms with significant populations of underrepresented students. PROJECT CA/RE will provide an effective model for assessing the classroom environment for the underrepresented student and for adapting teaching and support strategies necessary to enhance retention and success rates.
3. Population To Be Served

POPULATIONS TO BE SERVED:

PROJECT CA/RE has targeted the following populations:

Faculty
  Ten key faculty member from at least eight (8) specific disciplines will be included.

Disciplines.
  Sociology    History
  English      Mathematics
  Philosophy   Computer Science
  Engineering  Biology

Students.
  SWC serves approximately 17,000 students each semester. Because of its location (eight miles north of the U.S.-Mexican border), SWC attracts a wide range of students from all ethnic origins. Indeed, 68 percent of SWC students come from minority groups, the largest of which (42 percent) is Hispanic. The percent of minority enrollment is steadily increasing (up from 47 percent in 1980), a trend which is expected to continue as indicated by the ethnicity of students enrolled in the area junior and senior high feeder schools--75 percent minority students. Additionally, approximately 60 percent of all SWC students are the first in their families to attend college.

  A minimum of eight (8) classes with a significant number of underrepresented students will be targeted. Each participating class will average 30-35 students, with at least 40-50% underrepresented student enrollment. This will provide a total of approximately 100-120 students participating in the project during its development and refinement phases.

Internal Administrative Team.
  A minimum of five campuswide and program administrators will participate in the project and training programs developed. Those administrators include/represent the: Dean of Student Services, Director of Matriculation, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Assistant to the President for Planning & Research, Director of Computer Support Services.

External Assessment & Intervention Expert Team.
  A minimum of five experts will participate in the refinement of assessment modalities identified by Cross (1987) for particular application to underrepresented target students and in the development of teacher training
materials describing effective teaching behaviors for this significant population. Invited will be expert participants from Rio Hondo College, the LARC FIPSE Project, The College Board, Educational Testing Service, and AAHE.

Each of these populations will play an important role in the development of PROJECT CA/RE and will be extended services by the initiative.
4. Objectives

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

1. Secure the participation of Ten key faculty members, one each from eight diverse disciplines ensuring wide applicability for the assessment and teaching strategies, plus two faculty leaders. (July, 92) Evaluation standard will be identification of participants.

2. Identify a panel of five internal and external classroom assessment and teaching behavior experts who will modify (for the needs of underrepresented students) classroom assessment techniques described by Cross and Angelo (Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for Faculty/1987 and identify effective teaching behaviors designed for the learning needs of underrepresented students. (Identification-August 92; modification of classroom assessment techniques and identification of teaching behaviors - September-October, 92). Evaluation standard will be the development of a training manual containing appropriate classroom assessment techniques and descriptions of teaching behaviors sensitive to the needs of underrepresented students.

3. Develop and implement training for all ten participating faculty in classroom assessment techniques and teaching behaviors sensitive to underrepresented students. (Two faculty leaders training - UC Berkeley-July 92; Eight discipline faculty training - September-October 92 (initial) then on going training November 92 - February 93) Evaluation standard will be completion of training sessions by all ten Participating faculty.

4. Identify discipline course sections for inclusion in project and companion non-project courses (same discipline) for comparison research and identification of base-line data elements for research study. (Identification of project and non-project courses - August 92; identification of base-line data elements - September 92). Evaluation standard will be publication of research project course sections and specific data elements to be used in comparative research.

5. Implement pilot program including modified classroom assessment techniques and specific teaching behaviors sensitive to the learning needs of underrepresented students. (Classroom Assessment Techniques Phase I --- October - December 92; Phase II --- February - April 93; Specific teaching behaviors Phase I --- November-December 92; Phase II February-April 93) Evaluation standard will include written reports from all ten participating faculty on a) insight gained from classroom assessment techniques and b) adapted teaching behaviors implemented to two separate groups of targeted course sections.
6. Develop and implement evaluation plan including post-pilot briefings from participating faculty and comparative research on project and non-project course sections (Development October 92; Post-Pilot Briefings January 93 and April 93; Comparative research January and May/June 93). Evaluation standard will include written post-pilot reports, data analysis of project and non-project course sections, and analysis thereof.

7. Define and disseminate model and research for behavior retention and success of underrepresented students. (Refine model - May 93; Dissemination June-July 93). Evaluation standard will be the publication of the refined model and dissemination to the Chancellor’s Office and presentation of results at up to two regional/statewide community college conference.
5. Workplan Narrative

[NO “WORKPLAN” ACCOMPANIES THIS DOCUMENT.]
6. Expected Outcomes

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

A. PROJECT OBJECTIVES.

We can affirm that all project objectives and planned activities will be met. Over two years have been devoted on campus to the planning and investigation of this very important topic area. In recognition of our ability and leadership in this area, Southwestern College was chosen to participate in the national LARC Classroom Based Research effort funded by FIPSE. PROJECT CA/RE will be able to continue from the ground work of our participation in this national classroom assessment effort. All major activities have been articulated. The proposal reader will note that we have been quite realistic in the pace and scope of this pilot effort. All major responsibilities have been assigned. Upon conclusion, we intend all ten intervention team faculty will have participated in the initiative, at least 100-120 students across eight specific disciplines will have been served by the piloting of the strategies that comprise PROJECT CA/RE, and that a useful, portable, effective model will be developed and disseminated to other community college campuses. Internally, Southwestern College is committed to training additional faculty members in the model each year after funding has ended. Each participating faculty member will be expected to train two (2) other faculty in his/her discipline during the subsequent year after funding.

B. IMPACT OF THE PROJECT.

The general problems of classroom assessments, teaching behaviors, and the improvement of student learning are enormous. The problem of adequately addressing the learning needs of underrepresented students in the classroom is even more dramatic.

These issues have finally begun to receive considerable attention. Unfortunately for those of us dedicated to community college education, most current research and resultant models are based on K-12 or 4-year institutional experience and do not have direct applicability to the community college academic environment. PROJECT CA/RE will impact this shortcoming. It will build upon successful strategies compiled by Cross and others and will refine them for particular use in community college settings and for classroom populations that are diverse and heavily populated by underrepresented students. PROJECT CA/RE will identify and test teaching behavior and learning change strategies that are particularly successful in such classroom environments. Because of our innovative approach of implementing the project in at least eight different disciplines, PROJECT CA/RE will develop a useful model that has wide applicability and portability.

Our approach will work. Our leadership in this field has already been acknowledged. Our basic research has been done. We have a diversified student body. We can start immediately and ensure the full and successful completion of this project.
C. POTENTIAL FOR CONTINUED SUPPORT.

With most innovation in education, there must first come external support to sustain the development, implementation, and refinement of the innovation. Projects like this are invaluable from an academic/vocational education perspective. Once concluded, they can be sustained by the general budget support of the institution, particularly if they positively impact ADA through results such as the improvement of educational outcomes, reduction of attrition rates, and the improvement of the educational experience of the individual student. Such is the case for PROJECT CA/RE. Because the primary costs of this model are for its development, testing, and evaluation, the actual model material and training practicum can be produced and adopted at minimal cost. As campuses experience the positive fiscal and educational benefits of increased learning, increased retention, and reduced attrition rates, the model should enjoy continued application and expansion.

D. POTENTIAL FOR ADAPTATION.

The project will develop a model approach to teaching faculty effective classroom assessment and behavior modalities directed to the needs of underrepresented students. Faculty on most campuses have access to some faculty development and in-service training resources. These resources could be used to offer this specific training. No new staff are needed. No project director need be named. No special office is required to effect the model. Adoption of the model can be contained in any campus existing faculty development program.
7. Evaluation Plan

EVALUATION PLAN.

Two years have gone into the planning and initial format of our proposed classroom assessment/teaching behavior model. The proposed pilot has policies, planned activities, and has identified participating faculty. The project director (Mr. Doug Garrison, Dean of Student Services) has four years experience in classroom assessment activities. Required data elements and research processes have been identified. Timeliness and deadlines for all activities have been articulated. These essential prerequisites to effective formative evaluation have been identified and adopted.

Program evaluation will include all required elements:

> Work statement objective/activity completion.
> Identification of problems that were incurred, if any (processes).
> Identification of effective methods (processes).
> Identification of successes (outcomes).
> Development of recommendations.

The efficacy and outcome of our external team support will be easy to evaluate and measure. The external team will work with campus personnel to refine classroom assessment techniques with particular attention given to members of target underrepresented student populations. The primary evaluation mechanisms will be: (1) was the team convened and (2) were existing assessment approaches modified?

The efficacy and outcome of the proposed faculty training program will be documented as follows: (1) documentation that training curricula were developed, (2) documentation that the faculty intervention team were actually trained, (3) evaluation forms by faculty regarding the utility and effectiveness of the training experience, (4) post-pilot intervention evaluation forms from intervention faculty evaluating the actual in-class application of the techniques learned during the training experience, and (5) institutional data tracking student performance.

To gauge pilot intervention effectiveness, several base line data approaches have been devised. First, a specific class in each discipline area will be targeted for pilot intervention. A nonintervention, comparable class will be identified for comparison purposes. Second, specific base-line data will be generated for each of the intervention classes identified:

- Average norm class grade for each of last four classes.
- Spread of individual grades in class for last four classes.
- Number of entering, withdrawal, and completing students in each class for the last four classes.
- Number of completing students persisting in continued enrollment.

These data (e.g., norm class grade, spread of individual grades, entering/withdrawing/completing student totals, persistence rates) will be collected at the conclusion of the pilot terms for both the intervention classes and the non-pilot comparable classes. These data will be analyzed in order to provide objective data.
DISSEMINATION PLAN.

The product of PROJECT CA/RE will be a report detailing the model for improving retention and success rates for underrepresented students, including the following:

- Background information on retention and success rates for underrepresented students in California Community Colleges.
- Background information on classroom assessment practices and research.
- Descriptions of classroom assessment techniques (CAT’s) sensitive to the needs of underrepresented students.
- Descriptions of teaching behaviors and strategies sensitive to the needs of underrepresented students.
- Analysis of local research comparing project and non-project discipline courses.
- Recommendations for implementation at other community college campuses.

This report will be targeted for community college faculty and administrators, as well as the Chancellor’s Office.

Lead letters discussing the project and the available materials will be directed to key community college staff (President, Academic VP, Academic Senate president, and Faculty Development Center director). Project Director Garrison and key participating faculty will present workshops regarding the project at up to two regional/statewide community college and/or education conferences beginning July, 1993. Campuses interested in receiving project materials or assistance in implementation will be directed to contact the project director. Evaluations of the conference presentations will be conducted at the time of presentation. An evaluation of the model and results will be included in the project report. Campuses receiving and completing the project will be requested to evaluate the appropriateness of the model and report results of their efforts.

The results of this project will be made available to other community colleges in California and elsewhere. Publicity on the project, outcomes, and tangible products will be given by SWC project faculty and administrators at State conferences and meetings during 1993-94.
BUDGET SUMMARY

The total budget for this project is $25,425 of which $14,725 is being requested from FII. A total of $10,700 is being provided by SWC as its share (42%) of the project support. The details of the budget expenditures are displayed on Table I, Proposal Budget Detail Sheet. The Proposal Budget Summary is attached showing the objects of expenditure by local funding and FII.