The First Year Network: An Electronic Support Community for First Year Faculty

Educational Service Provided: Modesto Junior College seeks to create "The First Year Network," an electronic bulletin board linking twenty-five to thirty-five first year community college teachers with one another and with a group of experienced faculty.

Problem Addressed: Such an "electronic community" will greatly mitigate two serious problems: 1) A sense of isolation from other first year and disciplinary colleagues, and 2) The need for a setting in which problems can be discussed with non supervisory, experienced faculty.

Objectives: 1) Recruit first year faculty members, 2) Recruit network members, 3) Create an Advisory Committee, 4) Train network members, 5) Operate the provided telecommunications network, and 6) Evaluate the project.

All technical services necessary for the creation and operation of "The First Year Network" will be provided by contract with InfoNet, the state-wide California Community College bulletin board located at Modesto Junior College.

Evaluation: Formative and summative evaluation methods will be employed. Users will be surveyed on two occasions during the year and a summative report based on the surveys and an examination of the accumulated messages will provide an overall appraisal of the system's value.

Dissemination: Will take place through presentations at national and state professional conferences and publication and distribution throughout the California system of the survey results and the summative report. Additionally, as a sub-unit of InfoNet, news of "The First Year Network" will be included in regular InfoNet electronic bulletins and print publications.