Learning communities Project

Although College of Marin (COM) is located in a county with a significant upper middle-class population, many students are from "blue collar" and "new immigrant" backgrounds. These students often lack a model for higher learning and sometimes receive little support in their home environments and from the people who are important to them. Student success as demonstrated by course completion, retention and grades is weak for this group. Research has demonstrated that Learning communities can successfully address these issues.

COM proposes to develop a pilot program of two Learning Communities made up of two academic classes each will have course work interrelated with each other and which are also linked to a study skills class. A self-directed library research course will also be connected to the project. The library course will offer students the opportunity to do research via Internet.

Faculty will meet on a regular basis during the Fall 1995 semester to develop and augment their curricula, and in Spring 1996 to maintain communication as tile courses are being taught. The counselor teaching the study skills component will participate in these meetings. The goal is to have at least one course directed toward students in need of remediation support linked to a general education course.

Students will be expected to take at least one set of linked classes in the project. Evaluation of student outcomes will include the use of comparative analysis of completion rates and success rates using control groups. Faculty and student satisfaction will also be assessed.