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Southwestern
Impact on Systemwide Need

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The Eligible Programs and Services area addressed by PROJECT CA/RE II is "Program Development: Special learning needs of educationally disadvantaged students." The Board of Governors Basic Agenda Focus area addressed by the project is "Transfer and General Education."

PROJECT CA/RE II 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.

A key goal of the development of this model is to develop an interdisciplinary initiative. In Year I of the project, faculty participants were recruited from eight discipline areas, with a primary focus on Communication Arts and Humanities. In Year 2, faculty from eight additional disciplines will be recruited. These new disciplines will include a greater focus on vocational education, math and sciences. Therefore, faculty participants will come from the following discipline areas during this second year of the project:

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By training faculty from these diverse disciplines in classroom assessment techniques adapted to the needs of the underrepresented student and involving them in the development of teaching strategies adapted to those students, PROJECT CA/RE II will develop and test a model applicable for general education, basic skills, humanities, applied sciences, and vocational education disciplines.
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, 68% 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 took 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 PROJECT CA/RE.

During 1992-93 as a result of activities funded through FII for Project CA/RE, SWC trained 10 additional faculty representing eight disciplines in classroom assessment techniques and teaching strategies pertinent to underrepresented students. Evaluative data has been collected which 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.

Project CA/RE II will build upon the FIPSE LARC and the original Project CA/RE efforts to further develop this classroom assessment and teaching behavior model. This model will be further institutionalized by incorporation into SWC's 1993-94 staff development program - "Embracing Diversity II" -- and SWC will serve as a regional center to disseminate training information on these activities to other community colleges.
PROJECT CA/RE II has targeted the following populations:

Faculty

Ten additional key faculty member representing at least five (5) additional specific disciplines will be included.

Disciplines.
Nursing
ESL
Computer Science
Mathematics
Biology
History
Business
Speech

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, 65 percent of SWC students come from minority groups, the largest of which (40 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 sixteen (16) classes (eight representing the 1992-93 disciplines, and eight representing the additional 1993-94 disciplines) 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, and the Director of Computer Support Services.

External Assessment & Intervention Expert Team.

Two 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. Experts from Rio Hondo and Rancho Santiago Colleges who are involved in the national Beacon Project will be invited to serve as external consultants on this project.

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

1. Continue the involvement of the current ten faculty in eight disciplines as trainers for a new selection of ten more faculty representing at least five additional disciplines. (July, 93) Evaluation standard will be identification of participants.

2. Utilize the expertise of external consultants from the Beacon project (currently operating at Rio Hondo and Rancho Santiago Colleges) to adapt classroom assessment techniques and teaching strategies to the needs of underrepresented students. (Identification-August 93; modification of classroom assessment techniques and identification of teaching behaviors - September-October, 93). 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. Utilize the expertise gained by participating faculty from Year 1 of the project to provide training for the ten new participating faculty in classroom assessment techniques and teaching behaviors sensitive to underrepresented students. (Year 2 faculty initial training - September-October 93, then on-going training November 93 - February 94) 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 93; identification of base-line data elements - September 93). 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 93; Phase II February-April 94; Specific teaching behaviors Phase I November - December 93; Phase II February-April 94). 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 93; Post-Pilot Briefings January 94 and April 94; Comparative research January and May/June 94). 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 94; Dissemination June-July 94). 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 conferences.

8. Establish SWC as a regional center to provide training in and dissemination of the classroom assessment model. (Quarterly meetings for introduction of concepts and training in techniques - Sept 93, Dec 93, Mar 94; final quarterly meeting, Jun 94, will be in a conference format for presentation of refined model).
[No information provided in this document for this section.]
A. PROJECT OBJECTIVES.

We can affirm that all project objectives and planned activities will be met. Over three years have been devoted on campus to 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 II 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 III 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 through incorporation into SWC’s ongoing staff development program. The theme of the 1993-94 SWC staff development program is "Embracing Diversity." 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 II 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 II 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 II 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 II. The program will be institutionalized at SWC through the ongoing college staff development program. 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.
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 five 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.
The product of PROJECT CA/RE II 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 three quarterly workshops regarding the project at the Regional Center for Classroom Assessment, to be established at SWC. An end-of-year Regional Center for Classroom Assessment conference will be organized to disseminate the final results of the project. Evaluations of the quarterly workshops and conference presentations will be conducted at the time of presentation.

In addition, Project Director Garrison and key participating faculty will present information about the project at statewide community college and/or education conferences beginning July, 1994. Campuses interested in receiving project materials or assistance in implementation will be directed to contact the project director. 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 total budget for this project is $25,397, of which $14,950 is requested from the Fund for Instructional Improvement. A total of $10,447 will be provided by SWC as its share (41%) of the project support. The details of the budget request and the budget summary are presented on the following forms.