

STUDENT EQUITY PLAN 2015-16

Request for Funding

Request funding for: “Writing Across the Curriculum” faculty cohort for SEP-identified courses with high African American student population and low completion rates.

Total funding request: \$8563.80

Contact Phone: x3928 or x6008

Name: Karen Whitney

Title: Interim Associate Dean, Academic Affairs

Russell Serr

Professor, HSA, SLO Coordinator

Jenny Simon

Professor, ESL, SLO Coordinator

Department: Academic Affairs, Assessment of Learning Committee

Deans Signature: _____ Tom Lew/Elise Geraghty _____ **Date:** _____ October 14, 2015 _____

Part I: *Each funding request must develop specific, numerically measurable goals for each success indicator by student group, develop and implement evidenced-based activities to address achievement gaps that are discovered, show how funding will be expended, and evaluate those activities and their impact on improving student outcomes. The Student Equity Office will work with each request to assist in obtaining additional information to evaluate and measure the activities.*

The Student Equity Plan focuses on five Success Indicators: 1) Access, 2) Course Completion, 3) ESL and Basic Skills Completion, 4) Degree and Certification Completion, and 5) Transfer. Success Indicator outcomes are to be disaggregated by the racial/ethnic groups and characteristics listed below:

- Target Student Group(s) (Mark an X in all that apply to the activity requesting funding)

<input type="checkbox"/>	American Indian/ Alaska Native	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Black/ African American
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hispanic/ Latino	<input type="checkbox"/>	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/>	White
<input type="checkbox"/>	Males	<input type="checkbox"/>	Females	<input type="checkbox"/>	Foster Youth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Individuals with Disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Low-income Students	<input type="checkbox"/>	Veterans

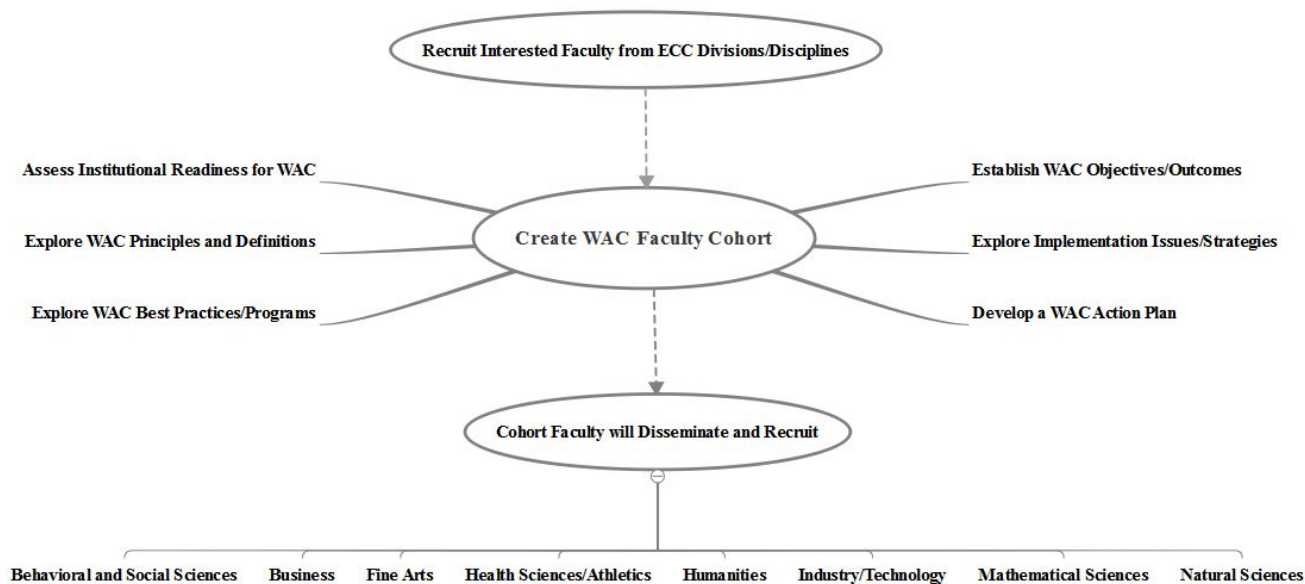
Activity Goal:

To implement authentic pedagogical change through thoughtful and empathic writing assignments in a variety of disciplines, targeting those courses most frequently taken by African American students. It will be determined whether a WAC pedagogical approach with enhanced assignments improves course completion rates for African American students.

Brief Description of Activity/ Justification:

Create a Writing Across the Curriculum faculty cohort to participate in a two-semester long project of professional development and WAC assignment implementation. Faculty will be chosen from several divisions across campus based on who teaches courses with higher African American student populations, particularly those courses with lower completion rates for African Americans (see SEP research file “Fall 2014 courses by non-successful completion” for a complete list). Faculty will participate in one 3-hour dialogue-based Professional Development workshop in spring 2016, at the completion of which faculty will work independently to produce an enhanced writing assignment geared to create authentic engagement. WAC’s primary goal is to promote the use of writing in all classes through such methods as interdisciplinary faculty forums. Furthermore, Title V §55002 requires that college coursework assessment be based upon “demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter and the ability to demonstrate that proficiency, at least in part, by means of written expression that may include essays, or, in courses where the curriculum committee deems them to be appropriate, by problem solving exercises or skills demonstrations by students.” The WAC approach works to ensure a consistent academic rigor of writing across the campus which will improve success and completion rates.

In fall 2016, once assignments have been developed, faculty will meet once again (1 hour) at the beginning of the semester to review and share plans for implementation of the assignment and to review the process for a pre-test to measure class communication ability thus creating a baseline for later comparison. Faculty will meet for a final time (1 hour) to share the results at the end of the semester. Data gathered at the end of the semester will indicate whether there was an improvement in learning and if those numbers are in agreement with successful completion rates.

**RESEARCH/JUSTIFICATION:**

The Communication ILO assessment conducted in spring 2015 evaluated 610 students’ ability to effectively communicate in written, spoken or signed, or artistic forms. A rubric created by the Assessment of Learning Committee (ALC) and addressing the traits of organization, delivery, and substantive content was distributed to faculty from a range of programs on campus. Results were gathered from Art, Art History, Math, English,

Computer Information Systems, Sign Language, and Nursing courses, and disaggregated according to type of communication, demographics, and units completed.

The disaggregation by completed units allowed the ALC to see that El Camino College students generally have higher success rates as they have more instruction and experience in college. However, this was not true for the written communication skills, which seem to improve for those in between 15-29 units, but then decline thereafter (Table 1). One theory for this decline in skills is based on the timing when most people take English 1A, often taken at the end of their first year or the beginning of their second year at El Camino College. While they are taking the class, students are more aware of certain standards of writing. The ALC believes that the post-English 1A-decline is a result of writing skills not being a primary focus in other coursework. Based on these results, one action plan is to implement a best practices recommendation of "Writing Across the Curriculum" (WAC).

Table 1

Communication Method	Units	ILO Passage Rate	Organization	Delivery	Substantive Content	People
Spoken/ signed	Total	79%	91%	87%	84%	178
	<15	59%	85%	71%	71%	27
	15-29	73%	91%	82%	74%	33
	30-59	84%	92%	89%	88%	75
	60+	88%	91%	95%	93%	43
Written	Total	71%	82%	79%	77%	409
	<15	68%	80%	76%	75%	176
	15-29	78%	86%	84%	82%	120
	30-59	68%	79%	80%	76%	71
	60+	69%	81%	74%	74%	42
Overall	<15	66%	80%	75%	75%	206
	15-29	76%	86%	84%	80%	156
	30-59	76%	85%	86%	83%	152
	60+	78%	85%	86%	85%	91

Anecdotal information gathered from faculty performing the ILO assessment indicates certain aspects of organization, delivery, and content as being the contributing factors to poorer scores. These aspects include weak thesis statements, inability to support the thesis or argument, poor research, and an inability to incorporate research smoothly and appropriately (perhaps due to lower reading comprehension). Based on the data, numeric and anecdotal, the ALC believes action is required in the areas of research, reading, and writing to improve student performance in communication. This can be remedied through a Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) faculty cohort.

Another indication found in the ILO data was the underperformance of certain demographic groups on campus, namely African Americans and Latinos, who underperformed between 16-21 percentage points lower than white students (Table 2 and 3) with African American students having the lowest success rate. This data correlates with research already performed by IRP at El Camino College wherein they found a 33.3% completion rate in Basic Skills English for African American students. It is reasonable to conclude that the low

completion rates in these classes is related to the students’ inability to successfully grasp concepts related to research, reading, and writing that are objectives of a Basic Skills English course (e.g. Eng A and B).

Table 2

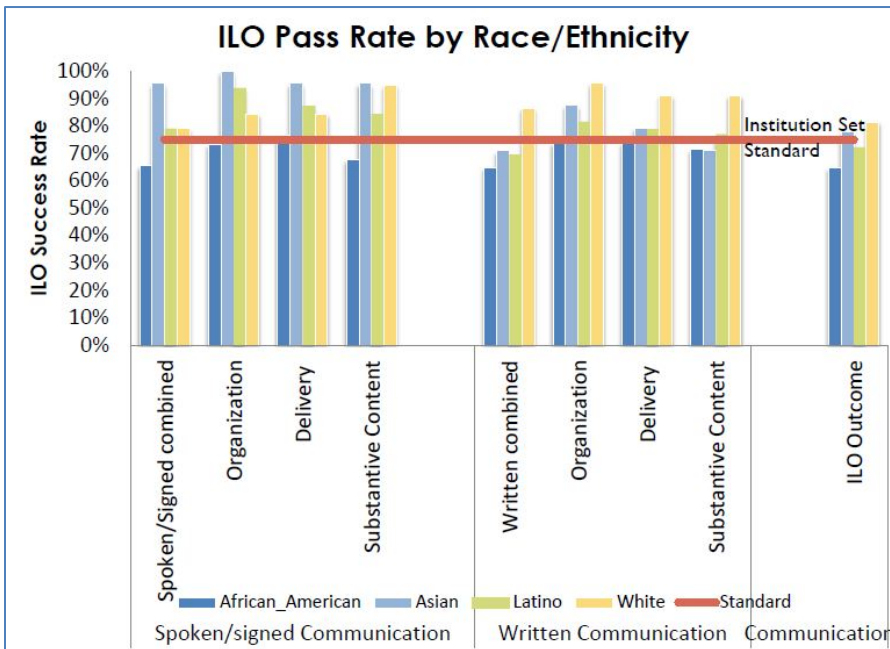


Table 3 – Pass rate

Written	African-American	65%
	Asian	71%
	Filipino	88%
	Latino	70%
	Other	75%
	Unknown	75%
	White	86%

Based on the above data, coming from the Communication ILO and SEP research, the ALC has determined an action plan to close this gap and improve written communication skills and completion rates in our African American student population.

PRIMARY ANTICIPATED OUTCOME:

By increasing authentic engagement with course material through enriched assignments and pedagogy, there will be higher completion rates in the targeted courses.

OTHER ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES:

While courses with higher population of African American students are targeted, this will positively affect the completion rates of all enrolled students in those courses.

Faculty will benefit from increased dialogue about best teaching practices in general. Specifically, English faculty will become more informed about the subject area application of the skills they teach and vice versa. Increased communication between English and non-English areas would encourage consistent standards of writing and research.

Part II: Planned Expenditures

- Activity Type(s) (Mark an X in all that apply. See [Student Equity 2015 - 2016 Expenditure Guidelines for more information, Attachment A](#))

	Outreach		Student Services/ Categoricals	X	Research and Evaluation
	SE Coordination/ Planning	X	Curriculum/ Course Dev. & Adaptation	X	Professional Development
	Instructional Support		Direct Student Support		

Part III: Please select one STUDENT SUCCESS INDICATOR below that best relates to your activity funding request:

ACCESS: The percentage of each population group that is enrolled compared to that group's representation in the adult population within the community served. Access is frequently calculated as a participation group.

COURSE COMPLETION: The ratio of the number of credit courses that students, by population group, complete successfully (grade of A, B, C, or P) compared to the number of courses in which students in that group are enrolled on the census day of the term.

ESL & BASIC SKILLS COMPLETION: The ratio of the number of students by population group who complete a degree-applicable course after having enrolled in an ESL or Basic Skills course compared to the number of those students who enrolled in an ESL or Basic Skill Course.

DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE COMPLETION: The ratio of the number of students by population group who complete a degree or certificate compared to the number of those students who demonstrate a desire to complete a degree or certificate.

TRANSFER: The ratio of the number of students by population group who complete transfer compared to the number of those students who demonstrate a desire to complete a degree or certificate.

Part IV: Please attach a separate sheet with your detailed budget for your request:

BUDGET/HOURS:

Spring semester

3 hour WAC training of faculty cohort (research, reading, writing). Faculty will leave with ideas that can be augmented to create enriched assignment and pedagogical practice.

Fall semester

2, 1-hour sessions: Beginning of the semester to share and fine-tune plan and discuss pre-assignment assessment to establish baseline. End of the semester report and share results.

2 faculty per division (6) each to be paid a special assignment for 8 hours at a rate of \$46.95/hour for a total of \$4507.20

3 faculty leaders (Jason Suarez lead + library/humanities faculty + one additional), each to be paid a special assignment for 15 hours at a rate of \$62.61/hour for a total of \$2817.45

3 faculty coordinators/assessment leaders, each to be paid a special assignment for 5 hours at a rate of \$62.61/hour for a total of \$939.15

Lunch for spring semester training- \$300

\$8563.80 total funds requested