Program Review - English

Prepared by: David Hurst, Greg Turner

Faculty: As the largest academic “unit” in the COS District we have 24 full-time and about 30 adjunct instructors in our area. This is a large group that represents a rich diversity of approaches to the teaching of writing with faculty holding degrees in British or American Literature, Composition Theory, Creative Writing, among other specialties. This diversity of background means that we collide with difference regularly, which helps sharpen intellectual rigor and ensures that we bring a healthy variety of teaching methods and cultural perspectives to the classes we offer, optimizing success for students with diverse backgrounds, career ambitions, and learning styles. For example, we typically offer 45 or more sections of English 1 each semester, but these classes all have a distinct personality: while sharing a common course outline and course outcomes, the readings, writing assignments, and foci of class investigation vary greatly from class to class. We take advantage of opportunities every semester to meet as a department to participate in group assessments, exchange ideas about teaching writing, and so on. We find a creative tension in our variety, even when we don’t always agree. We learn from each other and we often find that we grow as instructors from our contact with our colleagues. Because of our size, we are able to offer a full spectrum of writing classes (from basic skills to college composition) on the three campuses of College of the Sequoias as well as in several area high schools.

Writing Center: The department’s commitment to student success is also showcased in the campus Writing Center, a pedagogically sound instrument for helping writers in any discipline develop good academic writing. Our data shows that students enrolled in English composition classes who make use of the Writing Center succeed at higher rates than students who do not, and time spent in the Writing Center correlates with significantly stronger grades in English composition classes and better retention. (see the appended documents on Writing Center Success data from 2007 through Spring 2015.). The Writing Center model depends heavily on trained student tutors from the department’s four levels of tutor classes. Student tutors can earn a certificate from this program.

Accelerated Pathway for Basic Skills students: We have engaged with and adopted an Accelerated pedagogy, writing a new, Accelerated English course, English 261. The accelerated course seeks to eliminate one of the gaps in developmental education that contributes to high drop-out rates. We started Fall 2015 piloting one section of the course with an instructor trained in the pedagogy and will be expanding to three sections in Spring 2016 as other instructors are trained.

COS / High School Pathway Program: The English department now offers college classes (alternating semesters of English 251 and English 1) in area high school districts in Corcoran, Orosi, Woodlake, Hanford, Tulare, and Visalia. By taking both English 251 and 1 before they graduate from high school, students will be on an accelerated pathway to their college degree goals.

Academic Integrity: In support of standards of ethical academic conduct, a considerable portion of each English Department faculty’s time consists of educating students in ethical research, attribution, and original writing. Overwhelmingly, faculty engage in this process not to punish offenders, but to encourage, reward, and develop students’ critical thinking, academic curiosity, and character, and to prepare them for future academic success.

What improvements are needed?: The District continues to request additional sections of English to increase the overall District FTES. We will not be able to accommodate this request without additional faculty. One faculty retired after Spring 2015, another is retiring after Spring 2016, and we continue to experience high levels of part-time faculty turnover. While no classes were canceled in Fall 2015, in the recent past we had to cancel 6 fully-enrolled classes for lack of instructors. We need to increase the number of our full-time teaching faculty in order to meet the demands of the District.

District Support for the Writing Center Director: The pedagogical basis for the Writing Center, and its main strength, is its reliance on trained student tutors. Unfortunately, without release time to observe and counsel tutors in action outside the tutor classes, the Writing Center Director must work what is effectively an overload without pay. Currently, the Director receives a small stipend from the Essential Learning Initiative to do this work, but it does not cover the hours required, nor expansion to the Hanford or Tulare campuses.

Academic Integrity: Our efforts to ensure students write original work and learn the proper academic attribution are time and labor intensive. Often, students perceive this work as punitive, especially if they receive poor grades for improperly cited sources or worse, failing grades for plagiarism. The Blackboard SafeAssign feature, which many English instructors use, is difficult for both students and faculty to understand and it often flags harmless chunks of text while ignoring obviously quoted/copied material. The English department would prefer to use more reliable software in a teachable manner and be able to integrate comments and even grading rubrics into essay assignments so that students can learn from it rather than just be punished by it. We would like to use more sophisticated software to support an integrated institutional policy with an “education-first, detect-and-punish second” approach.

Describe any external

Additional Sections of English: Academic Services continues to push to increase class offerings in English, both in order to generate more FTES for the District, as
opportunities or challenges: well as to meet student demand. Through last-minute frantic hiring and the granting of temporary full-time loads to part-time faculty, we were able to avoid canceling English classes for Fall 2015, but not only is the situation tenuous, we cannot increase offerings. Retirements this year will push our full-time numbers back to the 2014 level.

Equitable Writing Center services:
1. Mandate: District Goals #2 and #3, and the specific District Objectives 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 3.1 all address improving student success rates, especially underserved students. Because virtually all students, transfer and developmental, are demonstrably well served (in terms of better grades and retention) by the Writing Center, it becomes imperative that its availability and services are maximized.

2. Mandate and Opportunity: The Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative (IEPI), a collaborative effort to help advance the institutional effectiveness of California Community Colleges, includes the development of the statewide indicators per SB 852 and SB 860, making Technical Assistance Teams (now called Partnership Resource Teams) and implementation grants available to colleges interested in receiving assistance. The District’s first of four Success Indicators is Course Completion Rate, currently at 68%. Again, our data shows that students attending the Writing Center are retained and succeed at rates well above the average, suggesting that equitable access could have a measurable impact on the IEPI indicator.

3. Mandate: Actionable Improvement Plan 9 for Accreditation Standard II.B.3.a states, "Using the program review and resource allocation processes, the superintendent/president will ensure that resource allocation decisions about student support services are based on data, and that special attention is given to ensuring that students have equitable access to services at all District locations and means of delivery.” This results in a mandate on the English department to provide equitable Writing Center (including online) services to all three campuses. The English Department will need additional resources in order to comply with this mandate. Full funding and thoughtful expansion can provide an opportunity to bring equity of services to the three campuses and to increase student success and retention rates across the district.

4. Challenge: Budget Insecurity. Although the District has agreed to fund one full-time (already filled) and two part-time (not yet filled) staff positions and has taken other measures to consolidate the Writing Center into District planning and budgets, much of the future of the Center is still unresolved. Two of the staff positions are funded from Student Equity and Basic Skills monies, which are not guaranteed. Student tutors are paid out of District funds, but some of that amount is still also offset by funds from the Essential Learning Initiative, which has been offering on-going support for the Writing Center since at least 2008. For planning and expansion purposes, the Writing Center needs to have secure, rather than cobbled-together, funding, and line-of-sight supervision and a dedicated space at all campuses.

C. Academic Integrity Opportunity: In Spring 2015, the Academic Vice President asked the English Department if the District should pursue licensing with Turnitin, a plagiarism-detection software service. The department almost unanimously responded in the affirmative. Turnitin is more than a plagiarism detection service and most of its features are designed to help teach academic integrity. Academic integrity is integral not just to District Goal #2 (“College of the Sequoias will improve the rate at which its students complete degrees, certificates, and transfer objectives”), but to its Mission Statement as well, which emphasizes preparing students for “productive work, lifelong learning and community involvement.” Not only will transfer students be required to adhere to their transfer university’s academic integrity policies, but College of the Sequoias has a commitment to students and the community to impart ethical values to its graduates. Additionally, an opportunity has arisen as the District moves to adopt Canvas as its campus Learning Management System: Canvas has a plugin that integrates Turnitin seamlessly with its grading feature.

Overall Outcome Achievement: Program assessments: We completed our initial assessment of the 2 programs housed within this academic unit, the English Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) AA degree and the Writing Consultancy Certificate in English. We were able to assess the internal consistency of both programs by mapping the course outcomes to the program outcomes. We were satisfied by the results of this mapping—and the process called our attention to a few aspects of these programs that we would have otherwise missed.

Course assessments: The results of course outcome assessment from all English courses is fairly consistent with our expectations. As any discipline, we would like to increase the rate at which students meet outcomes in all courses. We do see higher rates of outcome achievement in the specialty lit and creative writing courses, which we attribute to the high levels of motivation that English majors and potential English majors bring to these classes. One bright spot in our course assessments is the continuing success of our English 400 course, English Supplemental Learning Assistance (in other words, tutorial help in the Writing Center). As you see elsewhere in our Program Review (and as you see in our TracDat course assessment results), assistance of the Writing Center consistently results in success rates in English classes that are substantially higher.

Changes based on outcome achievement: Programs: For the English AA degree, we have explored the ramifications of using English 4 as either an advisory or a prerequisite for other literature courses. We also are pursuing identification and tracking of English majors so that we can devise mentoring relationships, track progress after transfer, and solicit assessments via questionnaires for future changes. For the Writing Consultancy Certificate in English, we discovered through the mapping assessment that a few of the courses that had been included in our program did not map well, so we deleted them from the program.

Courses: While we have been assessing outcomes department-wide since the 1990’s, we have just begun the process of incorporating changes based on our assessments. In the past, it was purely left up to individual instructors to make changes—or not—as a result of our assessments and discussions of results. In the past year that we have been identifying larger changes, we have primarily focused on the outcomes themselves. In almost all courses that were assessed, we
realized that the biggest issue with our assessments lay within the very large and detailed outcomes we had created years before. As a result, we have been revising course outcomes to be more universally understood and easier to assess. So far, we have revised and adopted new course outcomes for English 4, English 2, and all specialty lit courses, and we have task force that is working on revising outcomes for our sequence of composition courses (English 360, 251, and 1). Once we have outcomes that work well for assessment, we will focus more on using the assessment results to incorporate specific changes to instruction that will meet deficiencies indicated by the assessment results. This is occurring right now for English 2.

**Outcome cycle evaluation:** Programs: We established a three-year cycle for assessing Program Outcomes. Both programs have been assessed and we are now working on implementing improvements. The next assessments are scheduled as follows: Writing Center Consultancy Certificate in Spring 2017; English Transfer Degree in Spring 2018.

Courses: Every course is scheduled for assessment on an established 3-year cycle. We have created a web page to help track all stages of our cycles for every course and program in the division (http://cosenglish.org/assessment.html). Because student-demand for our specialty literature courses (English 10, 15, 16, 18, 19, 30, 31, 44, 45, and 46) is limited, we offer them on a staggered rotation of once every three years. Therefore, each time these courses are offered, they are assessed by the instructor of record. These instructors design their own plan to assess each outcome, or they follow a department-created rubric for assessment. All other courses have a three-year cycle for a comprehensive assessment, where the department meets once at mid-term (during the dialogue day) and once at the end-of-term to assess and discuss. The department as a whole reviews these assessments during the following semester’s convocation meeting. These comprehensive assessments begin with a task force of instructors who create a plan for the assessment. This plan is then carried out by the task force, with the participation of the rest of the department. The department has yet to figure out a way to create universal—or at least widely shared—changes that lead to improvement. Our future goal is that the task-forces will use the analysis provided by the department to develop at least one instructional strategy per cycle that will be tested by a group of instructors to see if it increases student success on one or more outcomes that prove to be troublesome for students. The results of these tests (and the strategies) would then be reported to the department to inform the instruction of other faculty in the department. Since our last Program Review, we have completed the first stages of such an assessment in English 2. After our assessment in Spring 2015, a task-force met and revised the outcomes of the course and wrote an analysis to enter into TracDat. At its next meeting, members will be sharing strategies that will target outcome number 1. The group will then choose one or more strategies to implement in several sections in the Spring 2016 semester with the newly written outcomes.

**Action: Adding Course Sections**

Provide as many sections of English classes as will meet the demands of students, counselors, and administration across three campuses and in a growing number of area high schools.

**Implementation Timeline:** 2015 - 2016

**Start Date:** 08/10/2015

**Status:** Continued Action

**Identify related Mission Statement:**

**course/program outcomes:** College of the Sequoias is committed to supporting students’ mastery of basic skills and to providing access to programs and services that foster student success.

**Institutional Learning Outcome:**

**Writing and Reading:**

Write coherently and effectively, adjusting to a variety of audiences and purposes, while taking into account others' writings and ideas.

District Objective 1.1 defines a goal of increasing enrollment 1.75% annually. To be successful, much of this increase will necessarily result in an increase in students needing both basic skills instruction as well as transfer-level English.

District Objectives 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 are indirectly affected by our ability to offer classes, since students cannot succeed if we are not able to offer courses or if the courses are over-full.

Academic Services continues to expand a high school pathway program (a form of acceleration) in area high schools. The English Department supports this program, but the additional classes put an additional stress upon our available faculty resources.

**Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position):**

David Hurst, Language Arts Division Chair; Stephanie Collier, Dean of Arts and Letters

**Rationale (With supporting data):** English 251, 1, and 2 fulfill key prerequisite, graduation, and transfer requirements for students throughout the District. Additionally, English 360, 261, and 251 are vital to our basic skills students. All of our core composition courses (along with the Wait Lists) typically fill early during registration. We rely on a high number of adjunct faculty to meet the needs of the District (we usually have between 30-35 adjunct English instructors). When we submit our schedules a year in advance of the courses being taught, we have instructors assigned. However, this coming year we will have lost two full-time faculty to retirement and often adjunct instructors’ plans change over the course of a year. Every semester, several part-time instructors give up their class assignments prior to the start of the semester, and full-time faculty are stretched so thin, we have had to grant full-time temporary loads to part-time faculty. While we have not had to cancel any classes in fall 2015, this was only because of a flurry of last-minute adjunct hires, the willingness of full-time faculty to take on extra load, and late-added sections. In the recent past, we have had to cancel a total of 6 fully-enrolled sections of English 251 the week before the semester began due to not having instructors to staff them. In spite of that, we added 16 sections from Fall 2014 to Fall 2015 and expanded our high school program to 9 area campuses. For 2016, we are slated to add not only more regular sections of classes (especially in Hanford and Tulare), but to reach 4 more high school campuses. While our fill rate at census has come down slightly to 101% in 2015, we had to cancel a total of 6 fully-enrolled sections of English 251 the week before the semester began due to not having instructors to staff them. In spite of that, we added 16 sections from Fall 2014 to Fall 2015 and expanded our high school program to 9 area campuses. For 2016, we are slated to add not only more regular sections of classes (especially in Hanford and Tulare), but to reach 4 more high school campuses. While our fill rate at census has come down slightly to 101% in

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2013-4 from 105% in 2011-12 (see “2015 Faculty Hiring Template”), our wait lists are perennially full and we turn many students away. 2013-4 FTES were at 867.1, a 16.6% increase from 2011-2 (see “2015 Program Review Data”). Our action plan is to supply faculty to staff all of the English classes that the District needs.

**Priority:** High  
**Safety Issue:** No  
**External Mandate:** No

### Add Resource Request for Action

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<tr>
<th>Resource Description</th>
<th>Why is this resource required for this action?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hire one Full-time, tenure track English Professor in Spring 2016 to start in Fall 2016.</td>
<td>We do not currently have sufficient numbers of FT and PT English faculty members to staff the number of sections of English planned by the District. Even though we hired two instructors in Spring 2015, one full-time person retired, so the net gain was only one. Of the current 24 FT tenured or tenure-track instructors, two split their loads between English and other areas (History and ESL). Three FT instructors are on Willie Brown partial retirements and teach reduced loads and one more will retire after Spring 2016, dropping our full-time numbers to the 2014 level (while we now offer at least 16 more sections than we did then). Our FT/PT ratio of FTEF which had been improving (from 52/48 to 64/36) has dropped to 57/43 and we are still well below the 75/25 ratio that we were at several years ago before we experienced a host of retirements. We hire a large number of new adjunct English faculty every year (we hired 5 to fill last-minute openings as the semester began), but we also typically lose as many as we can hire. We ask for temporary full-time allowances for part-time faculty almost every semester in order to meet student demand. English generates over 800 FTES every year—but we are being asked to generate more. English classes have high fill rates (101-105% over the 3 years for which we have data), and sections tend to fill within days of registration opening.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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### Related Documents:
- 2015 ENGL Data.pdf
- 2015 Faculty Hiring Template - LANG.pdf
- Section Fill Rate - English AY2015.pdf
- Section Fill Rate - English AY2016(F).pdf

### Link Actions to District Objectives

**District Objectives: 2015-2018**

* District Objectives - 1.1 - Increase overall enrollment by 1.75% annually  
* District Objectives - 2.1 - Increase the number of students who are transfer-prepared annually.  
* District Objectives - 2.2 - Increase the number of students who earn an associate degree or certificate annually.  
* District Objectives - 2.3 - Increase course success and completion rates in pre-transfer English, Math, and English as a Second Language courses annually.  
* District Objectives - 3.1 - Reduce the achievement gap of disproportionately impacted student groups annually, as identified in the Student Equity Plan.
Action: Writing Center Equitable Services

Provide equitable Writing Center Services on all three District campuses.

**Implementation Timeline:** 2015 - 2016
**Start Date:** 08/10/2015
**Status:** Continued Action

**Identify related Mission Statement:**
College of the Sequoias is committed to supporting students’ mastery of basic skills and to providing access to programs and services that foster student success.

**Identify related course/program outcomes:**
Mission Statement:
College of the Sequoias is committed to supporting students’ mastery of basic skills and to providing access to programs and services that foster student success.

Institutional Learning Outcome:
Writing and Reading:
Write coherently and effectively, adjusting to a variety of audiences and purposes, while taking into account others' writings and ideas.

District Objective 2.3:
Increase course success and completion rates in pre-transfer English, Math, and English as a Second Language courses annually.

District Objective 3.1: Reduce the achievement gap of disproportionately impacted student groups annually, as identified in the Student Equity Plan.

Program Outcomes:
Writing Consultancy Certificate in English:
Demonstrate proficiency in academic writing and reading and articulate writing concepts and rhetorical moves; Use effective interpersonal communication with diverse students, adjusting practices to a variety of writers' needs; Help peers use effective strategies to generate, revise, and edit their writing. Tutoring techniques will be grounded in writing center/composition theory.

**Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position):**
Joshua Geist, Writing Center Director

**Rationale (With supporting data):**
Our primary objectives are improving retention and success rates in English 360, 251, and 1, and a secondary objective is to support student tutors’ successful completion of the Writing Consultancy Certificate. The Writing Center serves all these goals directly.

Writing Center effectiveness data shows consistently higher success and retention rates across all three English class levels (see “Accumulated Writing Center Effectiveness data”). In Spring 2015, students using the Writing Center averaged 15% better success over the general population and 9% better retention. Additionally, the data shows the most significant improvements occur at the basic skills levels, especially the 360 level.

Our Writing Center model not only works at COS, it is the prevailing national Writing Center model, and depends upon peer (student) tutors trained in a pedagogical approach that not only helps students in specific instances (with a particular assignment, for example), but also teaches them skills for future writing assignments. Thus, the strength of the program depends upon effective interactions between the Writing Center Director and tutors, not just in the tutor classes, but in follow-up on-site observations, evaluations, and conferences with student tutors.

To have a sound Writing Center on all three campuses and an effective certificate program, we need to hire staff to supervise all three sites, have secure funding mechanisms for staff and student tutors, and the Writing Center Director must have the ability to work extensively outside the classroom as part of her or his duties.

District Goals #2 and #3, and the specific District Objectives 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 3.1 all address improving student success rates, especially underserved students. Because virtually all students, transfer and developmental, are demonstrably well served (in terms of better grades and retention) by the Writing Center, it becomes imperative that its availability and services are maximized.

The Writing Center budget lacks security: Although the District has agreed to fund three staff positions (one already filled) and has taken other measures to consolidate the Writing Center into District planning and budgets, much of the future of the Center is still unresolved. Two of the staff positions are funded from Student Equity and Basic Skills monies, which are not guaranteed. Student tutors are paid out of District funds, but some of that is offset by funds from the Essential Learning Initiative, which has been offering on-going support for the Writing Center since at least 2008. For planning and expansion purposes, the Writing Center needs to have secure (rather than cobbled-together) funding, line-of-sight supervision, and a dedicated space at all campuses.

**Priority:** High
**Safety Issue:** No
**External Mandate:** Yes

**Mandate Explanation:** Actionable Improvement Plan 9 for Accreditation Standard II.B.3.a states, "Using the program review and resource allocation processes, the
superintendent/president will ensure that resource allocation decisions about student support services are based on data, and that special attention is given to ensuring that students have equitable access to services at all District locations and means of delivery.” This results in a mandate on the English department to provide equitable Writing Center (including online) services to all three campuses. The English Department will need additional resources in order to comply with this mandate. Full funding and thoughtful expansion can provide an opportunity to bring equity of services to the three campuses and to increase student success and retention rates across the district.

The Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative (IEPI), a collaborative effort to help advance the institutional effectiveness of California Community Colleges, includes the development of the statewide indicators per SB 852 and SB 860, making Technical Assistance Teams (now called Partnership Resource Teams) and implementation grants available to colleges interested in receiving assistance. The District’s first of four Success Indicators is Course Completion Rate, currently at 68%. Again, our data shows that students attending the Writing Center are retained and succeed at rates well above the average, suggesting that equitable access could have a measurable impact on the IEPI indicator.

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<td>Base funding to support adequate student tutor coverage during operational hours at all three district campuses.</td>
<td>The use of faculty-supported, trained peer tutoring is the proven method for success in college Writing Centers across the nation. It is also the model the District follows. This model has resulted in success rates among student users in English classes that are regularly 20% or more higher than non-users of our service. Budget funding for student tutors is cobbled-together from some District funds and some Essential Learning Initiative funding and is thus temporary from year to year, making planning and recruiting difficult. Without trained student tutors to work with emerging college writers, the central driving force of our Center--the component at the heart of the Writing Center's success and lauded by the state's Basic Skills Initiative--will evaporate.</td>
<td>&quot;Resource Type&quot; was not checked because none of the categories was appropriate.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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**Related Documents:**
Writing Center Success Data 2007-Sp2015.pdf
## Add Resource Request for Action

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| Base funding to support 20% reassigned time for faculty coordination of Writing Center tutors across a three-campus district.                                                                                                           | Faculty coordination is required to operate pedagogically sound Writing Centers across the District. Teaching the tutor class is only one aspect of tutor training—tutors must also be observed and counseled as part of their mentoring process. Reassigned time allows a faculty coordinator the resources to mentor tutors as best practices are implemented; work with faculty across the disciplines and campuses to better address student need; monitor, coordinate, and adjust Writing Center tutor training to suit continuing and emerging needs; and oversee the nascent online tutoring services, among numerous other responsibilities. Without reassigned time, the Director essentially works an involuntary overload to provide the quality of tutors the District needs. The current Essential Learning Initiative stipend is inadequate for a growing three-campus center, as tutors need to be recruited, trained, and observed at each location, and this funding is also temporary. Please see the International Writing Center Association’s position statement (attached) on recommended background and release time for writing center administrators. Examining comparable Writing Centers in our area, Fresno City College has a faculty Writing Center Coordinator at 100% reassigned; Reedley College at 50%. | 1. "Resource Type" was not selected because none of the categories was appropriate for this request.  
2. "Cost Estimate" is figured at approximately $22,000 of full-time replacement cost. However, the actual replacement cost to the District is the cost of adjunct coverage of classes which is approximately $6,000. | Yes    |

### Related Documents:

- Writing Center Success Data 2007-Sp2015.pdf
- IEPI Success Indicators 2015.pptx
- IWCA Position Statement on Two-Year College Writing Centers.pdf

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## Link Actions to District Objectives

**District Objectives: 2013-2015**

* 2013-2015: District Objective #1 - District Objective #1 for 2013-2015: Provide effective academic support services as measured by an increase in the rate at which students successfully complete courses.

**District Objectives: 2015-2018**

* District Objectives - 2.3 - Increase course success and completion rates in pre-transfer English, Math, and English as a Second Language courses annually.
* District Objectives - 3.1 - Reduce the achievement gap of disproportionately impacted student groups annually, as identified in the Student Equity Plan.

### Action: Academic Integrity

Provide a formal, cross-curricular platform to promote academic integrity.

**Implementation Timeline:** 2015 - 2016

**Start Date:** 08/15/2016

**Status:** New Action

Identify related Mission Statement:
**course/program outcomes:** College of the Sequoias is a comprehensive community college district focused on student learning that leads to productive work, lifelong learning and community involvement.

District Goal #2:
College of the Sequoias will improve the rate at which its students complete degrees, certificates, and transfer objectives.

Board Policy 5500, Section A:
The following conduct shall constitute good cause for discipline, including but not limited to the removal, suspension, or expulsion of a student:
13. Cheating, plagiarism (including plagiarism in a student publication), or engaging in other academic dishonesty.

**Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position):**
David Hurst, Language Arts Division Chair

**Rationale (With supporting data):** Currently, there is no formal method of tracking instances of plagiarism except through the BIT form which is not generally known to faculty and for which there are no links on the COS website. English department instructors’ efforts to ensure students write original work and learn the proper academic attribution are time and labor intensive. Often, students perceive this work as punitive, especially if they receive poor grades for improperly cited sources or worse, failing grades for plagiarism. The Blackboard SafeAssign feature, which many English instructors use, is difficult for both students and faculty to understand and it often flags harmless chunks of text while ignoring obviously quoted/copied material. The English department would prefer to use more reliable software in a teachable manner and be able to integrate comments and even grading rubrics into essay assignments so that students can learn from it rather than just be punished by it. Additionally, it would be helpful to be able to collect and analyze data on student originality in their writing.

Turnitin has considerable evidence that originality improves significantly over time as students learn how to use research responsibly. Turnitin takes a scientific approach (see “The Scientific Basis of Turnitin”) and supports its efficacy with national as well as California-specific data (see “Turnitin Effectiveness: Plagiarism Prevention in California”). Turnitin offers the capability to be a teaching tool and to collect site-specific data. Students perceive Turnitin as helpful and designed to teach, rather than punish (see “What Do Students Think of Turnitin?”). Another study notes that Turnitin is a good tool for an “educate-first, detect-and-punish second” institutional approach, which the English Department favors (see “Efficacy of Turnitin in Support of an Institutional Plagiarism Policy”).

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<tr>
<td>Purchase a campus license for Turnitin, a plagiarism detection and academic integrity support service.</td>
<td>The only software currently available to COS faculty to support instructors' efforts to encourage original student writing and proper source attribution is SafeAssign, a Blackboard add-in. SafeAssign is extraordinarily limited in function, is difficult for both students and faculty to understand, often flags harmless chunks of text while ignoring obviously quoted/copied material, and provides no overall data to help a department or division make decisions about how to encourage and support academic integrity. In the District’s move to Canvas, we have an opportunity to get Turnitin at a good rate (see “Program Subscription” quote) and integrate the service into responses we make to student writing and our course gradebooks. Turnitin provides considerable evidence that originality improves significantly over time as students learn how to use research responsibly, it takes a scientific approach (see “Scientific Basis of Turnitin”), and supports its efficacy with national as well as California-specific data (see “Turnitin Effectiveness”). Turnitin offers the capability to be a teaching tool and to collect site-specific data. Students perceive Turnitin as helpful and designed to teach, rather than punish (see “What Do Students Think”). Another study notes that Turnitin is a good tool for an “educate-first, detect-and-punish second” institutional approach, which the English Department favors (see “Efficacy of Turnitin”).</td>
<td>The cost estimate below is based on the 2015-16 Turnitin quote (see &quot;Program Subscription&quot; document) multiplied by an estimated 9500 FTES, rounded up to the nearest thousand and then I added 10% to account for a likely increase for next year (increases are typically 5% to 10% per their contract). This is a fraction of Turnitin's normal price, by the way. I have contacted the Community College League of California to get a more accurate quote for next year, if possible.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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**Resource Type:** Technology

**Related Documents:**
- Program Subscription Announcement for Turnitin.docx
- The Scientific Basis of Turnitin.pdf
- Turnitin Effectiveness: Plagiarism Prevention in California.pdf
- What Do Students Think of Turnitin?.pdf
- Efficacy of Turnitin in Support of an Institutional Plagiarism Policy.pdf

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### Link Actions to District Objectives

**District Objectives: 2015-2018**

* District Objectives - 2.1 - Increase the number of students who are transfer-prepared annually.
* District Objectives - 2.2 - Increase the number of students who earn an associate degree or certificate annually.
* District Objectives - 2.3 - Increase course success and completion rates in pre-transfer English, Math, and English as a Second Language courses annually.

**Action: Accelerated Learning**

Begin to offer sections of English 261, linked to sections of English 405, and participate in more professional learning, particularly focused around Acceleration.

**Implementation Timeline:** 2015 - 2016

- **Start Date:** 08/10/2015
- **Completion Date:** 08/17/2015
- **Status:** Completed
Identify related course/program outcomes:

District Objective #6 for 2013 - 2015: Accelerate the schedule for offering the basic skills sequence in English or mathematics.

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position):

Erik Armstrong: Language Arts curriculum chair

Rationale (With supporting data):

Students who complete accelerated courses have been shown to be much more successful at the transfer level course. In “high-accelerated” courses, students had an 18% increase completion rate. Accelerated courses also offered more equitable success for students across demographics and placement levels (see RP Executive Summary). Our offering of more accelerated courses and funding the tutoring support can help The District address the achievement gap between prepared and unprepared college students, improving both the English completion rates and the college completion rate. Furthermore, by utilizing the many networks of faculty who teach accelerated classes, faculty who engage in professional learning about acceleration can help maximize the effect of English 261. By learning, practicing, discussing, and refining accelerated pedagogical principles, faculty can improve the success of students in each class, which will then improve the success of students through the English sequence. As well, when more and more faculty engage with accelerated pedagogy, whether or not they eventually teach an accelerated course, faculty will begin to witness the potential that students have to succeed, thereby withling away deficit-model thinking (see http://cap.3csn.org/2013/05/09/strong-performance-low-placed-students/).

Priority: High

Safety Issue: No

External Mandate: Yes

Mandate Explanation: The department has a mandate from the District’s Strategic Plan. This mandate is District Objective 6, which calls for English to accelerate the schedule for our basic skills sequence. This mandate falls under Focus Area III. Students’ Mastery of Basic Skills: Goal IIIC: Ensure that students who place into a basic skills level class successfully complete the highest level math and English courses established by their Student Educational Plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Add Resource Request for Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resource Description</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base funding to pay for the cost of a tutor for 8 hours/week.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2013-2015

* 2013-2015: District Objective #6 - District Objective #6 for 2013 - 2015: Accelerate the schedule for offering the basic skills sequence in English or mathematics.
Prepared by: David Hurst, Greg Turner

What are the strengths of your area?:

Faculty: As the largest academic “unit” in the COS District we have 24 full-time and about 30 adjunct instructors in our area. This is a large group that represents a rich diversity of approaches to the teaching of writing with faculty holding degrees in British or American Literature, Composition Theory, Creative Writing, among other specialties. This diversity of background means that we collide with difference regularly, which helps sharpen intellectual rigor and ensures that we bring a healthy variety of teaching methods and cultural perspectives to the classes we offer, optimizing success for students with diverse backgrounds, career ambitions, and learning styles. For example, we typically offer 45 or more sections of English 1 each semester, but these classes all have a distinct personality: while sharing a common course outline and course outcomes, the readings, writing assignments, and focus of class investigation vary greatly from class to class. We take advantage of opportunities every semester to meet as a department to participate in group assessments, exchange ideas about teaching writing, and so on. We find a creative tension in our variety, even when we don’t always agree. We learn from each other and we often find that we grow as instructors from our contact with our colleagues. Because of our size, we are able to offer a full spectrum of writing classes (from basic skills to college composition) on the three campuses of College of the Sequoias as well as in several area high schools.

Writing Center: The department’s commitment to student success is also showcased in the campus Writing Center, a pedagogically sound instrument for helping writers in any discipline develop good academic writing. Our data shows that students enrolled in English composition classes who make use of the Writing Center succeed at higher rates than students who do not, and time spent in the Writing Center correlates with significantly stronger grades in English composition classes and better retention. (see the appended documents on Writing Center Success data from 2007 through Spring 2015.). The Writing Center model depends heavily on trained student tutors from the department’s four levels of tutor classes. Student tutors can earn a certificate from this program.

Accelerated Pathway for Basic Skills students: We have engaged with and adopted an Accelerated pedagogy, writing a new, Accelerated English course, English 261. The accelerated course seeks to eliminate one of the gaps in developmental education that contributes to high stop-out rates. We started Fall 2015 piloting one section of the course with an instructor trained in the pedagogy and will be expanding to three sections in Spring 2016 as other instructors are trained.

COS / High School Pathway Program: The English department now offers college classes (alternating semesters of English 251 and English 1) in area high school districts in Corcoran, Orosi, Woodlake, Hanford, Tulare, and Visalia. By taking both English 251 and 1 before they graduate from high school, students will be on an accelerated pathway to their college degree goals.

Academic Integrity: In support of standards of ethical academic conduct, a considerable portion of each English Department faculty’s time consists of educating students in ethical research, attribution, and original writing. Overwhelmingly, faculty engage in this process not to punish offenders, but to encourage, reward, and develop students’ critical thinking, academic curiosity, and character, and to prepare them for future academic success.

What improvements are needed?:

Faculty: As large as our group of English faculty is, it is not large enough to meet the demands for more and more English classes across all three campuses of COS. The District continues to request additional sections of English to increase the overall District FTES. We will not be able to accommodate this request without additional faculty. One faculty retired after Spring 2015, another is retiring after Spring 2016, and we continue to experience high levels of part-time faculty turnover. While no classes were canceled in Fall 2015, in the recent past we had to cancel 6 fully-enrolled classes for lack of instructors. We need to increase the number of our full-time teaching faculty in order to meet the demands of the District.

District Support for the Writing Center Director: The pedagogical basis for the Writing Center, and its main strength, is its reliance on trained student tutors. Unfortunately, without release time to observe and counsel tutors in action outside the tutor classes, the Writing Center Director must work what is effectively an overload without pay. Currently, the Director receives a small stipend from the Essential Learning Initiative to do this work, but it does not cover the hours required, nor expansion to the Hanford or Tulare campuses.

Academic Integrity: Our efforts to ensure students write original work and learn the proper academic attribution are time and labor
Overall Outcome Achievement:

Describe any external opportunities or challenges:

Additional Sections of English: Academic Services continues to push to increase class offerings in English, both in order to generate more FTES for the District, as well as to meet student demand. Through last-minute frantic hiring and the granting of temporary full-time loads to part-time faculty, we were able to avoid canceling English classes for Fall 2015, but not only is the situation tenuous, we cannot increase offerings. Retirements this year will push our full-time numbers back to the 2014 level.

Equitable Writing Center services:
1. Mandate: District Goals #2 and #3, and the specific District Objectives 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 3.1 all address improving student success rates, especially underserved students. Because virtually all students, transfer and developmental, are demonstrably well served (in terms of better grades and retention) by the Writing Center, it becomes imperative that its availability and services are maximized.

2. Mandate and Opportunity: The Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative (IEPI), a collaborative effort to help advance the institutional effectiveness of California Community Colleges, includes the development of the statewide indicators per SB 852 and SB 860, making Technical Assistance Teams (now called Partnership Resource Teams) and implementation grants available to colleges interested in receiving assistance. The District’s first of four Success Indicators is Course Completion Rate, currently at 68%. Again, our data shows that students attending the Writing Center are retained and succeed at rates well above the average, suggesting that equitable access could have a measurable impact on the IEPI indicator.

3. Mandate: Actionable Improvement Plan 9 for Accreditation Standard II.B.3.a states, "Using the program review and resource allocation processes, the superintendent/president will ensure that resource allocation decisions about student support services are based on data, and that special attention is given to ensuring that students have equitable access to services at all District locations and means of delivery." This results in a mandate on the English department to provide equitable Writing Center (including online) services to all three campuses. The English Department will need additional resources in order to comply with this mandate. Full funding and thoughtful expansion can provide an opportunity to bring equity of services to the three campuses and to increase student success and retention rates across the district.

4. Challenge: Budget Insecurity. Although the District has agreed to fund one full-time (already filled) and two part-time (not yet filled) staff positions and has taken other measures to consolidate the Writing Center into District planning and budgets, much of the future of the Center is still unresolved. Two of the staff positions are funded from Student Equity and Basic Skills monies, which are not guaranteed. Student tutors are paid out of District funds, but some of that amount is still also offset by funds from the Essential Learning Initiative, which has been offering on-going support for the Writing Center since at least 2008. For planning and expansion purposes, the Writing Center needs to have secure, rather than cobbled-together, funding, and line-of-sight supervision and a dedicated space at all campuses.

C. Academic Integrity Opportunity: In Spring 2015, the Academic Vice President asked the English Department if the District should pursue licensing with Turnitin, a plagiarism-detection software service. The department almost unanimously responded in the affirmative. Turnitin is more than a plagiarism detection service and most of its features are designed to help teach academic integrity. Academic integrity is integral not just to District Goal #2 ("College of the Sequoias will improve the rate at which its students complete degrees, certificates, and transfer objectives"), but to its Mission Statement as well, which emphasizes preparing students for "productive work, lifelong learning and community involvement." Not only will transfer students be required to adhere to their transfer university’s academic integrity policies, but College of the Sequoias has a commitment to students and the community to impart ethical values to its graduates. Additionally, an opportunity has arisen as the District moves to adopt Canvas as its campus Learning Management System: Canvas has a plugin that integrates Turnitin seamlessly with its grading feature.

Program assessments: We completed our initial assessment of the 2 programs housed within this academic unit, the English Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) AA degree and the Writing Consultancy Certificate in English. We were able to assess the internal consistency of both programs by mapping the course outcomes to the program outcomes. We were satisfied by the results of this mapping—and the process called our attention to a few aspects of these programs that we would have otherwise missed.

Course assessments: The results of course outcome assessment from all English courses is fairly consistent with our expectations. As any discipline, we would like to increase the rate at which students meet outcomes in all courses. We do see higher rates of outcome achievement in the specialty lit and creative writing courses, which we attribute to the high levels of motivation that English majors
Changes based on outcome achievement: Programs: For the English AA degree, we have explored the ramifications of using English 4 as either an advisory or a prerequisite for other literature courses. We also are pursuing identification and tracking of English majors so that we can devise mentoring relationships, track progress after transfer, and solicit assessments via questionnaires for future changes. For the Writing Consultancy Certificate in English, we discovered through the mapping assessment that a few of the courses that had been included in our program did not map well, so we deleted them from the program.

Courses: While we have been assessing outcomes department-wide since the 1990’s, we have just begun the process of incorporating changes based on our assessments. In the past, it was purely up to individual instructors to make changes—or not—as a result of our assessments and discussions of results. In the past year that we have been identifying larger changes, we have primarily focused on the outcomes themselves. In almost all courses that were assessed, we realized that the biggest issue with our assessments lay within the very large and detailed outcomes we had created years before. As a result, we have been revising course outcomes to be more universally understood and easier to assess. So far, we have revised and adopted new course outcomes for English 4, English 2, and all specialty lit courses, and we have task force that is working on revising outcomes for our sequence of composition courses (English 360, 251, and 1). Once we have outcomes that work well for assessment, we will focus more on using the assessment results to incorporate specific changes to instruction that will meet deficiencies indicated by the assessment results. This is occurring right now for English 2.

Outcome cycle evaluation: Programs: We established a three-year cycle for assessing Program Outcomes. Both programs have been assessed and we are now working on implanting improvements. The next assessments are scheduled as follows: Writing Center Consultancy Certificate in Spring 2017: English Transfer Degree in Spring 2018.

Courses: Every course is scheduled for assessment on an established 3-year cycle. We have created a web page to help track all stages of our cycles for every course and program in the division (http://cosenglish.org/assessment.html). Because student-demand for our specialty literature courses (English 10, 15, 16, 18, 19, 30, 31, 44, 45, and 46) is limited, we offer them on a staggered rotation of once every three years. Therefore, each time these courses are offered, they are assessed by the instructor of record. These instructors design their own plan to assess each outcome, or they follow a department-created rubric for assessment. All other courses have a three-year cycle for a comprehensive assessment, where the department meets once at midterm (during the dialogue day) and once at the end-of-term to assess and discuss. The department as a whole reviews these assessments during the following semester’s convocation meeting. These comprehensive assessments begin with a task force of instructors who create a plan for the assessment. This plan is then carried out by the task force, with the participation of the rest of the department. The department has yet to figure out a way to create universal—or at least widely shared—changes that lead to improvement. Our future goal is that the task-forces will use the analysis provided by the department to develop at least one instructional strategy per cycle that will be tested by a group of instructors to see if it increases student success on one or more outcomes that prove to be troublesome for students. The results of these tests (and the strategies) would then be reported to the department to inform the instruction of other faculty in the department. Since our last Program Review, we have completed the first stages of such an assessment in English 2. After our assessment in Spring 2015, a task-force met and revised the outcomes of the course and wrote an analysis to enter into TracDat. At its next meeting, members will be sharing strategies that will target outcome number 1. The group will then choose one or more strategies to implement in several sections in the Spring 2016 semester with the newly written outcomes.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Add Resource Request for Action &amp; Why is this resource required for this action? / Tasks</th>
<th>Update on Resource Allocation Effectiveness &amp; Additional Comment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Review - English - Adding Course Sections - Provide as many sections of English classes as will meet the demands of students, counselors, and administration across three campuses and in a growing number of area high schools.</td>
<td>Resource Description: Hire one Full-time, tenure track English Professor in Spring 2016 to start in Fall 2016.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation Timeline: 2015 - 2016</td>
<td>Resource Type: Faculty- New/Replacement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Start Date: 08/10/2015</td>
<td>Why is this resource required for this action?: We do not currently have sufficient numbers of FT and PT English faculty members to staff the number of sections of English planned by the District. Even though we hired two instructors in Spring 2015, one full-time person retired, so the</td>
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**Actions**

| Status: | Continued Action |
| Identify related course/program outcomes: | |
| Mission Statement: | College of the Sequoias is committed to supporting students' mastery of basic skills and to providing access to programs and services that foster student success. |
| Institutional Learning Outcome: | Writing and Reading: Write coherently and effectively, adjusting to a variety of audiences and purposes, while taking into account others' writings and ideas. |
| District Objective 1.1 defines a goal of increasing enrollment 1.75% annually. To be successful, much of this increase will necessarily result in an increase in students needing both basic skills instruction as well as transfer-level English. |
| District Objectives 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 are indirectly affected by our ability to offer classes, since students cannot succeed if we are not able to offer courses or if the courses are over-full. |
| Academic Services continues to expand a high school pathway program (a form of acceleration) in area high schools. The English Department supports this program, but the additional classes put an additional stress upon our available faculty resources. |
| Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): | David Hurst, Language Arts Division Chair; Stephanie Collier, Dean of Arts and Letters |
| Rationale (With supporting data): | English 251, 1, and 2 fulfill key prerequisite, graduation, and transfer requirements for students throughout the District. Additionally, English 360, 261, and 251 are vital to our basic skills students. All of our core composition courses (along with the Wait Lists) typically fill early during registration. We rely on a high number of adjunct faculty to meet the needs of the District (we usually have between 30-35 adjunct English instructors). When we submit our schedules a year in advance of the courses being taught, we have instructors assigned. However, this coming year we will have lost two full-time faculty to retirement and often adjunct instructors’ plans change over the course of a net gain was only one. Of the current 24 FT tenured or tenure-track instructors, two split their loads between English and other areas (History and ESL). Three FT instructors are on Willie Brown partial retirements and teach reduced loads and one more will retire after Spring 2016, dropping our full-time numbers to the 2014 level (while we now offer at least 16 more sections than we did then). Our FT/PT ratio of FTEF which had been improving (from 52/48 to 64/36) has dropped to 57/43 and we are still well below the 75/25 ratio that we were at several years ago before we experienced a host of retirements. We hire a large number of new adjunct English faculty every year (we hired 5 to fill last-minute openings as the semester began), but we also typically lose as many as we can hire. We ask for temporary full-time allowances for part-time faculty almost every semester in order to meet student demand. English generates over 800 FTES every year—but we are being asked to generate more. English classes have high fill rates (101-105% over the 3 years for which we have data), and sections tend to fill within days of registration opening. |

**Add Resource Request for Action & Why is this resource required for this action? / Tasks**

- 09/30/2015 - Two full-time tenure-track instructors were hired and started in Fall 2015. Additionally, two part-time instructors were granted temporary full-time status and five new part-time instructors were hired. This did not fully meet the demand for classes, in part because two instructors, one full-time and one part-time, had to relinquish their classes for medical reasons, and a number of instructors are retiring and teaching a reduced load. Although we did offer more sections than previously, it was not enough to meet student demand and additional sections continue to be added. |

**Completed:** No

**Update Year:** 2014 - 2015

**Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes:** The English department was able to staff 16
year. Every semester, several part-time instructors give up their class assignments prior to the start of the semester, and full-time faculty are stretched so thin, we have had to grant full-time temporary loads to part-time faculty. While we have not had to cancel any classes in fall 2015, this was only because of a flurry of last-minute adjunct hires, the willingness of full-time faculty to take on extra load, and late-added sections. In the recent past, we have had to cancel a total of 6 fully-enrolled sections of English 251 the week before the semester began due to not having instructors to staff them. In spite of that, we added 16 sections from Fall 2014 to Fall 2015 and expanded our high school program to 9 area campuses. For 2016, we are slotted to add not only more regular sections of classes (especially in Hanford and Tulare), but to reach 4 more high school campuses. While our fill rate at census has come down slightly to 101% in 2013-4 from 105% in 2011-12 (see “2015 Faculty Hiring Template”), our wait lists are perennially full and we turn many students away. 2013-4 FTES were at 867.1, a 16.6% increase from 2011-2 (see “2015 Program Review Data”). Our action plan is to supply faculty to staff all of the English classes that the District needs.

**Priority:**
High

**Safety Issue:**
No

**External Mandate:**
No

**Program Review - English - Writing Center**
**Equitable Services - Provide equitable Writing Center Services on all three District campuses.**

**Implementation Timeline:**
2015 - 2016

**Start Date:**
08/10/2015

**Status:**
Continued Action

**Identify related course/program outcomes:**
Mission Statement:
College of the Sequoias is committed to supporting students' mastery of basic skills and to providing access to programs and services that foster student success.

**Resource Description:**
Base funding to support adequate student tutor coverage during operational hours at all three district campuses.

**Why is this resource required for this action?**
The use of faculty-supported, trained peer tutoring is the proven method for success in college Writing Centers across the nation. It is also the model the District follows. This model has resulted in success rates among student users in English classes that are regularly 20% or more higher than non-users of our service. Budget funding for student tutors is cobbled-together from some District funds and some Essential Learning Initiative funding and is thus temporary from year to year, making planning and recruiting difficult. Without trained student tutors to work

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<tr>
<td>Program Review - English - Writing Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equitable Services - Provide equitable Writing Center Services on all three District campuses.</td>
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<td><strong>Implementation Timeline:</strong></td>
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<td>2015 - 2016</td>
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| Start Date: | 08/10/2015 |
| Status:     | Continued Action |

| Identify related course/program outcomes: | Mission Statement: | College of the Sequoias is committed to supporting students' mastery of basic skills and to providing access to programs and services that foster student success. | Resource Description: | Base funding to support adequate student tutor coverage during operational hours at all three district campuses. | Why is this resource required for this action? | The use of faculty-supported, trained peer tutoring is the proven method for success in college Writing Centers across the nation. It is also the model the District follows. This model has resulted in success rates among student users in English classes that are regularly 20% or more higher than non-users of our service. Budget funding for student tutors is cobbled-together from some District funds and some Essential Learning Initiative funding and is thus temporary from year to year, making planning and recruiting difficult. Without trained student tutors to work | Updates | more sections this fall than were offered the previous fall, including expanding high school offerings. This has somewhat reduced the fill rate to 101% at census, but there were still nearly a thousand students on waitlists as the semester began. |
**Institutional Learning Outcome:**
Writing and Reading:
Write coherently and effectively, adjusting to a variety of audiences and purposes, while taking into account others' writings and ideas.

**District Objective 2.3:**
Increase course success and completion rates in pre-transfer English, Math, and English as a Second Language courses annually.

**District Objective 3.1:** Reduce the achievement gap of disproportionately impacted student groups annually, as identified in the Student Equity Plan.

**Program Outcomes:**
Writing Consultancy Certificate in English:
Demonstrate proficiency in academic writing and reading and articulate writing concepts and rhetorical moves; Use effective interpersonal communication with diverse students, adjusting practices to a variety of writers' needs; Help peers use effective strategies to generate, revise, and edit their writing. Tutoring techniques will be grounded in writing center/composition theory.

**Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position):**
Joshua Geist, Writing Center Director

**Rationale (With supporting data):**
Our primary objectives are improving retention and success rates in English 360, 251, and 1, and a secondary objective is to support student tutors' successful completion of the Writing Consultancy Certificate. The Writing Center serves all these goals directly.

Writing Center effectiveness data shows consistently higher success and retention rates across all three English class levels (see "Accumulated Writing Center Effectiveness data"). In Spring 2015, students using the Writing Center averaged 15% better success over the general population and 9% better retention. Additionally, the data shows the most significant improvements occur at the basic skills levels, especially the 360 level.

Our Writing Center model not only works at COS, it is the prevailing national Writing Center model, and depends upon peer (student) tutors with emerging college writers, the central driving force of our Center—the component at the heart of the Writing Center's success and lauded by the state's Basic Skills Initiative—will evaporate.

**Cost Estimate:**
54000

**Related Documents:**
- Writing Center Success Data 2007-Sp2015.pdf

**Resource Description:**
Base funding to support 20% reassigned time for faculty coordination of Writing Center tutors across a three-campus district.

**Why is this resource required for this action?:**
Faculty coordination is required to operate pedagogically sound Writing Centers across the District. Teaching the tutor class is only one aspect of tutor training—tutors must also be observed and counseled as part of their mentoring process. Reassigned time allows a faculty coordinator the resources to mentor tutors as best practices are implemented; work with faculty across the disciplines and campuses to better address student need; monitor, coordinate, and adjust Writing Center tutor training to suit continuing and emerging needs; and oversee the nascent online tutoring services, among numerous other responsibilities. Without reassigned time, the Director essentially works an involuntary overload to provide the quality of tutors the District needs. The current Essential Learning Initiative stipend is inadequate for a growing three-campus center, as tutors need to be recruited, trained, and observed at each location, and this funding is also temporary. Please see the International Writing Center Association’s position statement (attached) on recommended background and release time for writing center administrators. Examining comparable Writing Centers in our area, Fresno City College has a faculty Writing Center Coordinator at 100% reassigned; Reedley College at 50%.

**Cost Estimate:**
22000

**Related Documents:**
- Writing Center Success Data 2007-Sp2015.pdf
- IEPI Success Indicators 2015.pptx
- IWCA Position Statement on Two-Year College Writing Centers.pdf
trained in a pedagogical approach that not only helps students in specific instances (with a particular assignment, for example), but also teaches them skills for future writing assignments. Thus, the strength of the program depends upon effective interactions between the Writing Center Director and tutors, not just in the tutor classes, but in follow-up on-site observations, evaluations, and conferences with student tutors.

To have a sound Writing Center on all three campuses and an effective certificate program, we need to hire staff to supervise all three sites, have secure funding mechanisms for staff and student tutors, and the Writing Center Director must have the ability to work extensively outside the classroom as part of her or his duties.

District Goals #2 and #3, and the specific District Objectives 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 3.1 all address improving student success rates, especially underserved students. Because virtually all students, transfer and developmental, are demonstrably well served (in terms of better grades and retention) by the Writing Center, it becomes imperative that its availability and services are maximized.

The Writing Center budget lacks security: Although the District has agreed to fund three staff positions (one already filled) and has taken other measures to consolidate the Writing Center into District planning and budgets, much of the future of the Center is still unresolved. Two of the staff positions are funded from Student Equity and Basic Skills monies, which are not guaranteed. Student tutors are paid out of District funds, but some of that is offset by funds from the Essential Learning Initiative, which has been offering on-going support for the Writing Center since at least 2008. For planning and expansion purposes, the Writing Center needs to have secure (rather than cobbled-together) funding, line-of-sight supervision, and a dedicated space at all campuses.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09/30/2015 - This is still a work-in-progress. A Writing Center Coordinator was hired in Spring 2015 to oversee the logistics and deployment of services on all campuses. Full expansion to the Hanford and Tulare campuses, though, awaits additional hiring of two staff to help manage availability (the positions are expected to fill Fall 2015). Additional coordination of tutor availability and line-of-sight supervision is needed for each campus. The Writing Center Director still has limited ability, due to inadequate funding, to observe and counsel tutors on site.</td>
<td><strong>Completed:</strong> No</td>
<td><strong>Update Year:</strong> 2014 - 2015</td>
<td><strong>Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes:</strong> Although there is not full expansion to all three campuses, the Writing Center has been able to offer limited hours, by appointment, in Hanford. Expansion to Tulare awaits line-of-sight supervision. The Writing Center has opened an avenue for online access, which spreads its availability even to fully online students, as well as students at other campuses with computer access. Writing Center data continues to show a very strong correlation between Writing Center attendance and success and retention in English 360, 251, and 1.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Yes

Mandate Explanation:
Actionable Improvement Plan 9 for Accreditation Standard II.B.3.a states, "Using the program review and resource allocation processes, the superintendent/president will ensure that resource allocation decisions about student support services are based on data, and that special attention is given to ensuring that students have equitable access to services at all District locations and means of delivery." This results in a mandate on the English department to provide equitable Writing Center (including online) services to all three campuses. The English Department will need additional resources in order to comply with this mandate. Full funding and thoughtful expansion can provide an opportunity to bring equity of services to the three campuses and to increase student success and retention rates across the district.

The Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative (IEPI), a collaborative effort to help advance the institutional effectiveness of California Community Colleges, includes the development of the statewide indicators per SB 852 and SB 860, making Technical Assistance Teams (now called Partnership Resource Teams) and implementation grants available to colleges interested in receiving assistance. The District’s first of four Success Indicators is Course Completion Rate, currently at 68%. Again, our data shows that students attending the Writing Center are retained and succeed at rates well above the average, suggesting that equitable access could have a measurable impact on the IEPI indicator.

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<tr>
<th>Program Review - English - Academic Integrity</th>
<th>Resource Description:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Integrity:</td>
<td>Purchase a campus license for Turnitin, a plagiarism detection and academic integrity support service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation Timeline:</td>
<td><strong>Resource Type:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2015 - 2016</td>
<td>Technology</td>
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<td>Start Date:</td>
<td><strong>Why is this resource required for this action?:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>08/15/2016</td>
<td>The only software currently available to COS faculty to support instructors’ efforts to encourage original student writing and proper source attribution is SafeAssign, a Blackboard add-in. SafeAssign is extraordinarily limited in function,</td>
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<td>New Action</td>
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<td>Identify related course/program outcomes:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission Statement:</td>
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College of the Sequoias is a comprehensive community college district focused on student learning that leads to productive work, lifelong learning and community involvement.

District Goal #2: College of the Sequoias will improve the rate at which its students complete degrees, certificates, and transfer objectives.

Board Policy 5500, Section A: The following conduct shall constitute good cause for discipline, including but not limited to the removal, suspension, or expulsion of a student:
13. Cheating, plagiarism (including plagiarism in a student publication), or engaging in other academic dishonesty.

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): David Hurst, Language Arts Division Chair

Rationale (With supporting data):
Currently, there is no formal method of tracking instances of plagiarism except through the BIT form which is not generally known to faculty and for which there are no links on the COS website. English department instructors’ efforts to ensure students write original work and learn the proper academic attribution are time and labor intensive. Often, students perceive this work as punitive, especially if they receive poor grades for improperly cited sources or worse, failing grades for plagiarism. The Blackboard SafeAssign feature, which many English instructors use, is difficult for both students and faculty to understand, often flags harmless chunks of text while ignoring obviously quoted/copied material, and provides no overall data to help a department or division make decisions about how to encourage and support academic integrity. In the District’s move to Canvas, we have an opportunity to get Turnitin at a good rate (see “Program Subscription” quote) and integrate the service into responses we make to student writing and our course gradebooks. Turnitin provides considerable evidence that originality improves significantly over time as students learn how to use research responsibly, it takes a scientific approach (see “Scientific Basis of Turnitin”), and supports its efficacy with national as well as California-specific data (see “Turnitin Effectiveness”). Turnitin offers the capability to be a teaching tool and to collect site-specific data. Students perceive Turnitin as helpful and designed to teach, rather than punish (see “What Do Students Think”). Another study notes that Turnitin is a good tool for an “educate-first, detect-and-punish second” institutional approach, which the English Department favors (see “Efficacy of Turnitin”).

Cost Estimate:
23000

Related Documents:
- Program Subscription Announcement for Turnitin.docx
- The Scientific Basis of Turnitin.pdf
- Turnitin Effectiveness: Plagiarism Prevention in California.pdf
- What Do Students Think of Turnitin?.pdf
- Efficacy of Turnitin in Support of an Institutional Plagiarism Policy.pdf
specific data (see “Turnitin Effectiveness: Plagiarism Prevention in California”). Turnitin offers the capability to be a teaching tool and to collect site-specific data. Students perceive Turnitin as helpful and designed to teach, rather than punish (see “What Do Students Think of Turnitin?”). Another study notes that Turnitin is a good tool for an “educate-first, detect-and-punish second” institutional approach, which the English Department favors (see “Efficacy of Turnitin in Support of an Institutional Plagiarism Policy”).

**Priority:**
High

**Safety Issue:**
No

**External Mandate:**
No

Program Review - English - Accelerated Learning - Begin to offer sections of English 261, linked to sections of English 405, and participate in more professional learning, particularly focused around Acceleration.

**Implementation Timeline:**
2015 - 2016

**Start Date:**
08/10/2015

**Completion Date:**
08/17/2015

**Status:**
Completed

Identify related course/program outcomes:
District Objective #6 for 2013 - 2015: Accelerate the schedule for offering the basic skills sequence in English or mathematics.

**Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position):**
Erik Armstrong: Language Arts curriculum chair

**Rationale (With supporting data):**
Students who complete accelerated courses have been shown to be much more successful at the transfer level course. In “high-accelerated” courses, students had an 18% increase completion rate. Accelerated courses also offered more equitable success for students across demographics and placement levels (see RP Executive Summary). Our offering of more accelerated courses and funding the tutoring support can help The District address the achievement gap between prepared and unprepared college students, improving both the

**Resource Description:**
Base funding to pay for the cost of a tutor for 8 hours/week.

**Why is this resource required for this action?:**
One of the tenets of Acceleration is to provide timely remediation and support. It would be extremely helpful for students to have that support in the classroom as they struggle with an accelerated experience. Offering this in-class support can improve the success rates of the course, offering even more success at the English sequence.

**Cost Estimate:**
1296

08/27/2015 - In Fall 2015, the department debuted one section of English 261, piloted by the instructor who wrote the curriculum and has received acceleration training. In Spring 2016, three sections are scheduled. All 261 courses are matched to 405 lab sections with student tutors.

**Completed:**
Yes

**Update Year:**
2014 - 2015

**Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes:**
Since this course has just launched, it is too early to assess its impact on the District Objective (Objective #6 for 2013 - 2015: Accelerate the schedule for offering the basic skills sequence in English or mathematics).

**Related Documents:**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Add Resource Request for Action &amp; Why is this resource required for this action? / Tasks</th>
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<td>English completion rates and the college completion rate. Furthermore, by utilizing the</td>
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<td>many networks of faculty who teach accelerated classes, faculty who engage in professional</td>
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<td>learning about acceleration can help maximize the effect of English 261. By learning,</td>
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<td>practicing, discussing, and refining accelerated pedagogical principles, faculty can improve</td>
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<td>the success of students in each class, which will then improve the success of students through</td>
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<td>the English sequence. As well, when more and more faculty engage with accelerated pedagogy,</td>
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<td>whether or not they eventually teach an accelerated course, faculty will begin to witness</td>
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<td>the potential that students have to succeed, thereby writling away deficit-model thinking (see</td>
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<td><a href="http://cap.3csn.org/2013/05/09/strong-performance-low-placed-students/">http://cap.3csn.org/2013/05/09/strong-performance-low-placed-students/</a>).</td>
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**Priority:**
High

**Safety Issue:**
No

**External Mandate:**
Yes

**Mandate Explanation:**
The department has a mandate from the District's Strategic Plan. This mandate is District Objective 6, which calls for English to accelerate the schedule for our basic skills sequence. This mandate falls under Focus Area III. Students’ Mastery of Basic Skills: Goal IIC: Ensure that students who place into a basic skills level class successfully complete the highest level math and English courses established by their Student Educational Plan.