

09-08-02

Proposal for ELLI Funds (Form)

Person(s) Requesting Funds: Kathleen Conway, Adrienne Duarte & David Mael

Academic Year: 2008 - 2009

Division: Student Services

Date: 9/2/08

PRESS THE F1 KEY FOR CONTEXT HELP WHEN ENTERING INFORMATION IN THE TABLE FIELDS BELOW. COLUMNS WILL EXPAND TO INCLUDE MORE TEXT.

Planned Action (Brief Description of Project)	Effective Practice and Strategy	New, Change, or Expansion	Expected Outcomes	Assessment/Dissemination of Results	Target Date for Completion	Responsible Persons/Dept	ELLI Budget Category	Specific Budget Amounts Include Breakdown (or attach)
1. Establish a part-time learning specialist position to assist with learning assessments (Please see supplemental information attached.) 2. Hire 3 tutors for a total of 58.5 hours per week to assist in providing instructional support to FYE students enrolled in the Learning Skills Lab's LS 308 class. 3. Computer & printer for Learning Specialist. 4. 2 Testing kits for learning specialist to assess students' cognitive and academic skills	D1, D2, D3 and D10 - please see attached.	Expansion; it is anticipated that the increase in LD identified students would provide enough additional funding to the DRC program for the position to continue to be funded (by the categorical DRC program) in future years. It would also expand the Learning Skills class offering to 75 FYE students.	Increased early identification of students who would qualify for learning disabilities services through the DRC; retention of high-risk students, and improved student learning outcomes in basic skills classes; increase of 6.25 FTES.	A comparison of students identified as eligible for LD services over the past three years will be compared with the number of completed assessments accomplished with 1.5 learning specialists. I will report the results back to this committee along with information regarding the continuity of this position with DRC funds. In addition, the success of students participating in the Instructional Support class will be evaluated, with results being reported back to the committee.	Learning Specialist hire to be accomplished by January 9th, completed learning assessments will be tabulated by July 1, 2009, along with data regarding success of students participating in the Instructional Support class.	Kathleen Conway/ David Mael/ Adrienne Duarte	Student assessment and student counseling Supplemental Instruction and Tutoring Basic Skills/ESL Tutoring Instructional Equipment and Materials	1) .5 Learning Specialist employed 1/9/08 - 6/30/09 @ 20 hours weekly: \$28,000 2) \$8,424 (student tutors) 3) \$1,800 (computer and printer) 4) WIAT II kit - (\$633.25) and WAIS IV kit (\$1,355.75); total: \$1,989. Total Request: \$40,213

Other Required Institutional Resources (e.g. Facilities): office space for testing

Other Funding Sources: **DRC funding is based on weighted student count, it is anticipated that this position will increase the student count in a heavily weighted category, thereby having a positive effect on next year's DRC funding.**

Check here if additional narrative (detailed history, need, rationale) is attached: Number of pages attached: 4

Distribution:

For ELLI Use Only

1. ELLI Faculty Coordinator Sharon S. Grant
2. Division Chair Dr. Charles George
3. Dean Dr. Charles George

Budget Committee Approval Approved Approved with Changes Noted Not Approved Resubmit with Changes Noted
Comments:

Jennifer Vega La Serra, Ph.D. Date

Ron Johnson, Ed.D. Date

Supplemental Information: Request for .5 Learning Specialist

The incidence of unidentified learning disabilities within our college population is undoubtedly high. Given that many of the students we are targeting for basic skills assistance may have severe literacy problems, it should be noted that 60% of adults who struggle in that area have previously undetected or untreated learning disabilities.

Not surprisingly, in the two short years since the move of the Learning Skills Lab to the Learning Resource Center, the number of students identified as requiring learning disabilities assessments has risen by approximately fifty percent.

D.1 EFFECTIVE PRACTICE Sound principles of learning theory are applied in the design/delivery of courses in the developmental program. According to Pintrich, feedback using assessment instruments can help students develop awareness about their own motivation and learning. The establishment of a half-time Learning Specialist position would enable students to receive critical information regarding how they learn, what study skills and study habits would be beneficial for them to possess and whether or not they might be a student who would qualify for learning disability services. The LS position is a faculty position, individuals in this position are trained and certified by the California Community College system to administer and interpret the Learning Disability Eligibility Model. These six components are briefly described below.

- Component 1: Intake Screening. Interview and optional self-report procedures are completed with the student to elicit information regarding his or her current academic difficulties, educational history, health history, career goals, family history, language proficiencies, and employment experiences. This information provides a basis for understanding the student's perspective, choosing appropriate assessment instruments, and interpreting the student's performance within his or her familial, educational and cultural experience.
- Component 2: Measured Achievement. The student with learning disabilities exhibits areas of strengths and weaknesses. This uneven or inconsistent profile in skills is evaluated in the Measured Achievement component. The procedures in this component identify those academic or employment settings in which the student has been successful and further distinguish the student with learning disabilities from one better characterized as a low achiever.
- Component 3: Ability Level. Procedures in this component indicate the student's potential for success in the general community college curriculum.
- Component 4: Processing Deficit. This component's procedures evaluate the student's weaknesses in acquiring, integrating, storing, retrieving, and expressing information.

- Component 5: Aptitude-Achievement Discrepancy. This component's procedures identify those academic areas in which the student's achievement is significantly less than that of peers with the same ability level.
- Component 6: Eligibility Recommendation. The LD specialist analyzes and synthesizes all of the assessment information to determine the best explanation for the student's performance. The specialist also determines whether the student is eligible for services as a student with learning disabilities within the community college system, and therefore for funding through the California Community Colleges Disabled Student Programs and Services allocation model. For students who are determined to be eligible for services, the specialist identifies the student's educational limitations and documents the recommended accommodations and compensatory strategies.

When the Learning Skills Lab co-located at the Learning Resource Center, the courses were offered to students with disabilities as well as students who did not possess a disability. This allowed students who lacked basic skills proficiency with an additional resource: not only would they receive specialized instructional support, but they now had the ability to receive early detection and intervention from a trained Learning Specialist.

Currently, the demand for learning assessments has outpaced our ability to complete them; students who request learning assessments must wait until the following semester to be tested. We began the semester with 64 students on our waiting list. With one FTE Learning Assessment Specialist available last year, we assessed a total of 63 students, 98% of the students assessed were determined to be students with disabilities. These assessments provide critical information regarding supports and strategies needed for students to realize success in their classes. In the absence of this support and information, our students who are at the highest risk for dropping out are being underserved. McCombs correctly argues that teachers must assume some of the responsibility for helping students to develop meta-cognitive awareness; through the provision of a psychoeducational assessment (which supplies information regarding cognitive function and current reading, writing and math levels), a learning specialist is best equipped to provide this assistance to our high risk students.

D.2 EFFECTIVE PRACTICE Curricula and practices that have proven to be effective within specific disciplines are employed. “Literacy skills, at their most basic, encompass the ability to read and write. The literature generally supports the use of one to strengthen the development of the other.” Students who may need to use audio texts in conjunction with print must have this information early, in order to facilitate success and retention. Additionally, students who may need technology to facilitate the writing process must also have this need identified early on. An additional learning specialist would facilitate the early identification so critical in serving these students.

D.3 EFFECTIVE PRACTICE The developmental education program addresses holistic development of all aspects of the student. Attention is paid to the social and emotional development of the students as well as to their cognitive growth. According to the literature, “best practice” developmental programs are those that address the holistic development of the student that “without exception, the one variable that

separated the successful developmental program from those with moderate success... was that

instructors spent as much time on self-concept development as on teaching basic skills.” Based on these studies, the literature contains various recommendations that developmental programs pay close attention to the social, emotional and personal development of learners. McCabe and Day (1998) recommend that model developmental programs should integrate learning and personal development strategies and services. The provision of timely learning assessments will equip students with personalized learning profiles that clearly illustrate the strategies and services that will be crucial to their success. In doing so, we will be demonstrating the “respect for diverse talents and ways of learning” – an approach identified by Chickering and Gamson (1991) as associated with high student engagement.

D.10 EFFECTIVE PRACTICE Programs provide comprehensive academic support mechanisms According to this section, the most common form of academic support or learning assistance occurs at the community college in the form of the lab or center featuring a variety of services; learning assistance programs are particularly important for the students’ ability to successfully move through their courses of study. Noel, Levitz, and Kaufman (1982, 7) assert that remediation services alone were unable to ensure student success. In a comprehensive program, [s]tudents must learn to motivate themselves, to **understand their learning strengths and weaknesses**, to negotiate the academic and social system, to **adapt effective and efficient methods of processing information**, and to alter previously established attitudes about their own potential and their sense of self-worth. A learning assessment provided by a qualified, skilled learning specialist yields specific information regarding learning strengths and weaknesses along with effective, efficient methods of processing information for that individual student. Recommended methods typically employ strategies as well as services and technology available through the Disability Resource Center (DRC).

The Learning Specialist is in a unique position to de-stigmatize what it means to be a student who qualifies for learning disability services and to point out to students the value in receiving services/accommodations from the DRC. Learning disability is defined as a persistent condition of presumed neurological dysfunction which may exist with other disabling conditions. This dysfunction continues despite instruction in standard classroom situations. To be categorized as learning disabled a student must exhibit:

- Average to above average intellectual ability;
- Severe processing deficit(s);
- Severe aptitude-achievement discrepancy(ies); and
- Measured achievement in an instructional or employment setting.

In addition to specialized technology, students qualifying for learning disability services can receive test accommodation services, note taking services, priority registration and access to trained counselors. **According to information gleaned from our Research**

and Planning department students who participated in the DRC in outperformed non-disabled students in retention. From fall 2007 to spring 2008 students in the DRC had a retention rate of 71%, non disabled students achieved a retention rate of 61% during this same period. Also, during the 2007-08 academic year **nearly 80% of students in the DRC had an accumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher.** This is remarkable when one considers that many of these students have significant barriers that they must overcome in order to compete on an equal basis with their non disabled peers. We believe that using ELI funds to hire a part-time Learning Assessment Specialist will greatly improve the outcomes for many of our students who struggle academically.

Summary of benefits to providing a part-time Learning Specialist to students:

- ◆ Provide Learning Disability Assessments to determine if students might qualify for critical support services of which they are unaware;
- ◆ Review assessment results with students in order to identify mitigating strategies that will optimize their performance;
- ◆ Consult with faculty to apprise them of students' strengths, weaknesses and learning styles;
- ◆ Make referrals to other student supports on campus to ensure that wrap-around services are holistic in nature and are utilized by students;
- ◆ Enroll students in the Learning Skills courses so that students can receive specialized instructional support;
- ◆ Act as a liaison with the ELI committee and provide information to them that evaluates the progress, improvements, and challenges of this initiative

Supplemental Information: Request for 3 Tutors

The Learning Skills Lab's Instructional Support class has struck a chord with students not previously identified with any disabilities. Since opening the course up to "nondisabled" students, interest has heightened considerably; enrollment this semester has increased 50% over last fall. In the words of one such student, "I enrolled last fall, and my GPA was 4.0 at the end of the term. I didn't enroll in the spring, and my grade point average really dropped. I'm back this semester, because I know this really works for me."

Students are required to schedule 3 hours per week, per unit of credit (for up to 3 units). Trained tutors circulate among students, who are working on assignments for their other classes, or brushing up on math and English skills. Tutors offer discipline-specific study strategies, as well as subject specific tutoring. They are also trained to identify disability characteristics, and refer to the learning specialist for learning assessments and/or referral to the DRC. Training takes place during weekly staff meetings.

The hire of these three additional tutors would enable this model to be replicated in the FYE area, with the learning specialist providing training and supervision to the tutors. S/he would also be available to assist with situations requiring instructor intervention.