

Reading to Improve Writing

Project Personnel

Total Award Amount \$ 40,000

Project Director

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Project Description

The goal of this project is to update and improve the writing curriculum at The Learning Resource Center/University Writing Center by including reading as an integral part of the existing writing curriculum. The UWC is one of four tutoring programs under the auspices of the LRC; the others are: Associated Student Incorporated (ASI) Tutoring Program, Math and Science Help (MaSH) and College Reading Skills Program (CRSP). While ASI, MaSH and UWC offer university wide access, CRSP is a TRIO funded project with a select population totaling 250. By creating a reading component in the existing UWC writing curriculum, we would be able to extend the benefits of reading to all students.

Target Groups

The UWC caters to the writing needs of our undergraduate and graduate students. Writing assistance includes help with class assignments, resumes, prep for the Graduate Writing Test (GWT) and course specific group tutoring. Two very distinct groups exist and each has a great need for improvement in writing. These are our incoming students who are placed in Basic English: Eng. 095 and Eng. 096 and our junior and seniors who are struggling to pass the (GWT). Each would benefit from greater exposure to a program in which reading comprehension, writing styles and vocabulary are discovered through reading.

Group 1 Unlike English 095, English 096 does not have mandatory supplementary group tutoring. The reading enhanced UWC curriculum will fill this void. Beginning in 2012, all CSU students would be required to begin their remediation in the summer prior to the fall for which they are admitted. This newly developed curriculum will become a part of the academic and tutoring support that the university currently offers to Early Starters (students who begin preparatory work in the summer).

Group 2 The University has about an 80% - 84% GWT pass rate. This rate is skewed by 1st time test takers. Repeaters have an increasingly hard time passing the GWT and after 4 attempts, success is very unlikely. The LRC/UWC currently supports workshops for persons preparing to take the GWT and facilitates the waiver process for those who after 4 attempts petition to have the requirements waived. This facilitation involves a minimum of 12 contacts with a writing tutor. This enhanced reading/writing curriculum would be used during these tutoring sessions.

A reading and a writing expert would work together to develop several modules that would become: the basis 1) of Developmental English supplementary instruction, 2) for incorporation into current GWT workshops, tutoring and waiver process, 3) of a blue print for tutor training. The LRC would work with the reading/writing experts to develop training modules for the new curriculum. They would develop a diagnostic tool for students' reading placement. An evaluator will track students' participation and analyze data

This is a pilot program with two cohorts (1 per yr.) of Early Starters and 8 cohorts (1 per qtr.) of GWT test takers.