

# **Strengthening Pre-Collegiate Education in California Community Colleges Request for Proposals**

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching invite proposals to strengthen pre-collegiate<sup>1</sup> programs in mathematics and English language arts in California Community Colleges. The goal of the proposed work should be to enhance the mathematics and literacy achievement of academically underprepared students who enter the higher education system through our two-year institutions in California and to increase the knowledge of how to strengthen programs that can be widely applied in pre-collegiate education.

In this restricted competition, 20-25 campuses are being invited to apply. Nine to 12 campuses will then be chosen to participate. Campuses will be selected on the basis of the existing pre-collegiate programs in mathematics and/or English language arts, the quality of the proposed enhancement of their programs, and other criteria described in this Request For Proposals. It is not the intent of the grant program to fund completely new programs from the ground up. Rather, the intent is to build upon and enhance programs that already show promise of effectiveness and have the potential for generating lessons and materials that others can use and build on.

This program will focus on *teaching and learning in the classroom*, and will work actively with individual faculty, but it should have a *program-wide reach*. While it is not necessary that all pre-collegiate classes be included in the funded activities, the project should be designed so that effective innovations can be expanded to other pre-collegiate courses and perhaps to collegiate-level offerings as well. The proposed activities in pre-collegiate education can focus on English or mathematics classes or both.

Many campuses have already undertaken various innovations and reforms in pre-collegiate education. The following are examples of the types of activities that might be

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<sup>1</sup> The term “pre-collegiate here includes courses designated variously as “developmental,” “remedial,” “basic,” “foundational,” and other courses designed to prepare students for access to credit-bearing coursework in mathematics and English language arts.

included and expanded as part of a proposed program. Examples include—but are not limited to:

- Linked courses that create a sense of community for students and assist them to connect learning across courses and contexts.
- New pedagogies that involve students actively in their learning, and lead to deeper forms of understanding.
- Strategies that involve students in reflection on their own learning, and that help students become more purposeful and intentional about their learning.
- New structures that allow faculty to collaborate in developing and testing out new approaches in the classroom.
- Faculty development efforts that help teachers understand the learning process and shape their practices.
- Pre-collegiate courses in both mathematics and the English language arts that are specifically designed to meet the needs of specific target populations (e.g., English language learners, newcomer immigrants, high school non-completers or dual-enrolled (high school/college) students ages 16-24, etc.).

Central to this grant program is the development of tools and protocols that faculty and students can use to explore, document, more deeply understand, and improve learning in mathematics and English. These collaborative activities should foster and sustain a *culture of inquiry and evidence* within campuses and across campuses. The Carnegie and Hewlett Foundations' capacity for dissemination and outreach will allow the work to become visible in larger educational and policy communities in ways that others can learn about and build on. We anticipate that the impact will extend beyond the participating institutions to other California institutions and beyond.

For background about the project's rationale and design, see the enclosed paper.

## **BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANT CAMPUSES**

Campuses selected will receive:

- Annual grants of \$75,000-125,000, totaling \$225,000-\$375,000 over three years. The budget for the first year will be \$75,000-\$100,000
- Opportunities to enhance and refine their pre-collegiate program through systematic study and analysis
- Opportunities to connect with and learn from other campuses through meetings and on-line networking
- Support, feedback, and assistance from Carnegie senior scholars, staff, and consultants around areas such as assessment and evaluation
- Consultation with Carnegie Foundation's Knowledge Media Lab to document programmatic innovations in ways that strengthen the effort and allow others to learn from it.
- State-wide and national visibility through the Carnegie Foundation publications, meetings, and network.
- Contingent on the availability of additional grant funds, selected campuses may be eligible for additional funding to support institutional reforms (e.g., academic, administrative, or financial policies/practices) that are aligned with the goal of improving academic outcomes for low-income and minority students, especially those in pre-collegiate courses.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPANT CAMPUSES**

Participating campuses will be expected to:

- Demonstrate active support by the campus president and leadership
- Attend two program meetings a year at the Carnegie Foundation
- Work collaboratively with other campuses in their geographic cluster
- Collect and share data; all campuses will collect common indicators of student progress:
  - Completion rates and grades in pre-collegiate courses (with attention to a grade of B or better)
  - Grades and success in next level courses

- Retention rates and continuity to college level courses
- Overall GPA

In addition to the common indicators, campuses may choose other measures such as using placement tests as pre/post assessments of knowledge. Or campuses may choose to administer a survey of student engagement like the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). Moreover, campuses may identify qualitative outcomes, for example, critical thinking, communication skills, or appropriate use of self-assessment, and describe how they will be documented and assessed.

- Document and share project work in various public settings and outlets so that other campuses can learn from it
- Submit mid-year financial reports and annual reports on program progress to the Carnegie Foundation
- Designate a *program co-coordinator* who will oversee project activities and a *financial officer* who will be responsible for the fiscal integrity of the project
- Commit resources—campus funds or dedicated staff and faculty time—to sustain successful project activities beyond the period of the funded project.

## **PROPOSAL DESIGN**

In the calendar year 2005, initial grants of \$75,000-\$100,000 will be awarded. Proposals should describe the first year's activities in detail and outline intended activities for two more years. Grants are renewable; at the end of year one, campuses that have demonstrated satisfactory activities and progress will receive funding (at approximately the same level or slightly higher) to continue for the following year. At that time they will also submit continuation proposals or addenda for program changes based on what is learned in the first year.

**Use of Funds:** Because the grants are meant to build on existing efforts, grant funds are aimed at the extra expenses required to refine and expand these efforts. Funds cannot be used to create new full-time faculty positions, though partial support for a new position such as a project director for faculty development may be considered when there is strong

institutional commitment to long-term sustainability. Activities covered by the grant may include but are not limited to:

- faculty stipends or release time for faculty
- project administration costs (e.g., faculty reassignment)
- consultants or external coaches
- travel and conference costs
- outreach and local meetings
- involvement of students in project activities
- creation of printed materials for outreach.

The grant may include indirect costs up to 10%, which can be used for computers, supplies and communication, phones, space, etc. Budget details and other commitments will be negotiated with each selected campus through a memorandum of understanding (MOU).

### **Application Format**

Each proposal should include:

1. A completed application cover sheet with the name of the *project co-coordinator* and *contact information* and a one-paragraph summary of your project.
2. A narrative not to exceed seven pages that includes the following:

**A. *Campus Demographic Description.*** Provide a demographic description (age, gender, ethnicity, and students on financial support/eligible for Pell grants) of your student body and students in your pre-collegiate courses. How many students in your pre-collegiate courses are youth (age 16-24)? How many are adult students (25 or older)?

**B. *Current Program Description.*** Describe your current pre-collegiate program. How many levels of pre-collegiate mathematics and English do you offer? How many students are taking pre-collegiate courses? What data do you regularly collect on pre-collegiate education?

- Describe special features or pedagogical innovations in your pre-collegiate program. What is the rationale (theory of change) for those program aspects? Do you have data assessing the effectiveness of those strategies?

**C. *Proposed Plan of Action.*** Describe your proposed plan of action. How would you use the financial, technical and intellectual support provided by this initiative to build on and expand your current work?

- Will you work with any particular student subpopulations? Does your program (or proposed program) of pre-collegiate education include strategies specifically designed to meet the needs of sub-groups with special needs, including for example, English language learners, newcomer immigrants, youth ages 16-24, high school non-completers, or dual-enrolled (high school/college) students? If so please describe these strategies or interventions.
- What would be the activities and goals for the first year? For the following two years? How will principles and strategies outlined in the Carnegie paper (attached) be incorporated in the work?

**D. *Evaluation.*** Describe your evaluation plan. How would you measure the effectiveness of your proposed activities? What data (quantitative and qualitative) besides the common indicators would be gathered on program effects? Who would be responsible for data management and analysis? How would data be used by faculty and administrators?

**E. *Institutional Resources/Reform Alignment.*** Describe other campus resources—administrative support, institutional research capacity and commitment to using data for improvement, infrastructure for faculty development—that are available to support this effort.

- Is your campus engaged (or does it plan to engage) in institutional reform (e.g., reform of academic, administrative, financial, social/cultural policies practices) designed to support improved academic outcomes for low-income and minority students, especially those in pre-collegiate courses? If so please describe those efforts and the relationship to your plan for improving instruction in pre-collegiate mathematics and/or the English language arts.

**F. Dissemination Plan.** Describe plans for dissemination of work and products. How will work be made available for others to build on? Do you have relationships and a history of collaboration with neighboring campuses? Are you connected to professional organizations or networks? What do you envision as possible opportunities to make professional presentations or engage other campuses in the work? How would you use the resources provided by this initiative to expand on your current efforts?

**Appendix** In addition you may include an appendix that presents more detail about your work in pre-collegiate education. It could be, for example, a campus report with an existing program description, a paper prepared for a conference, an assessment currently in use, or a Website for students.

3. A detailed budget and budget narrative for the project, including a description of how the program will be sustained after the 3-year funding period. Funding for the first year should be in the range of \$75,000-100,000.

4. A letter of support from the president, indicating why this work is important to the college and how it will be supported beyond the three years of the project. This letter also authorizes use of campus data.

## **Timeline**

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| RFP issued:.....   | 15 September 2004 |
| Proposals due:.....  | 1 November 2004   |
| Notification of award:.....  | 10 December 2004  |
| MOU negotiated and program work begins .....                               | January 2005      |
| Interim financial report .....   | 30 June 2005      |
| Continuation Proposal,<br>including a draft of the First Year Report ..... | November 2005     |
| First Year Report (Final draft) .....                                      | 31 December 2005  |

## **Criteria for Selection**

Campuses will be selected based on the quality of their proposed activities and the potential to strengthen learning in pre-collegiate classes and the extent to which they meet the following criteria:

- compelling focus for effort (the problem addressed represents a common need and the proposed solution seems likely to be effective)
- work is grounded in current campus efforts
- current evidence about the potential effectiveness of approach
- capacity for others to adapt and build on the approach (it does not rely on idiosyncratic campus characteristics or individual personal commitment)
- connections to other campuses and networks
- administrative support and other campus resources and cooperation.

*Application Cover Sheet*  
Strengthening Pre-Collegiate Education in Community Colleges

**Sponsored by The Hewlett Foundation  
and  
The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching**

Proposals must be received at the Carnegie Foundation by  
November 1, 2004

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Financial Officer: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

A one-paragraph (approximately 100 words) summary of your project.

When proposal is complete...

- send an electronic version of the narrative to [hecht@carnegiefoundation.org](mailto:hecht@carnegiefoundation.org)

- send 4 hard copies to

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching  
Carnegie Initiative on Development Education  
51 Vista Lane  
Stanford, CA 94305  
(attention Sherry Hecht)

Questions should be directed to Rose Asera

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching  
Telephone 650-566-5152 or [asera@carnegiefoundation.org](mailto:asera@carnegiefoundation.org)