MINI-GRANT FINAL REPORT
Grant period: July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

Indicate Mini-Grant you are submitting:   __ TECO   __ Gilbart   X Faculty   __ Staff

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Project Overview:

The Ybor City Campus Learning Council implemented a seminar/webinar series focused on quality enhancement of the student-faculty / learning-teaching relationship to increase student success and improve student retention. Over the course of the academic year, the Ybor City Campus Learning Council facilitated five webinars and offered an additional six webinars via the web.

Findings:

The webinars provided methods to enhance student learning by providing faculty with techniques to engage students, promote critical thinking, and incorporate teamwork. Faculty were asked to implement several techniques in their classrooms and provide feedback. Faculty comments/findings were as follows:

Strengths:

“This session prodded me to greater mindfulness of daily class summarizing. I especially liked the idea of have students do it themselves. I now leave 5-10 minutes at the end of class for it.”

“The students commented favorably about the written outline of what would be covered in the course.”

“I think this concept helped organize the class and better prepared the students for discussion of the material.”

“Getting an outside perspective on issues facing colleges. Plus, it was a great way to spark faculty discussions on these topics.”
“Great ideas for teaching techniques in the classroom. Discussions following the webinar”

“Learned new ways to engage students on day one. Also, some new ideas on using collaborative teams in the classroom.”

“My classes will be using much more collaborative learning.”

Weaknesses:

“Inconsistent quality of presenters and presentations.”

“Overly-long—could have been better as HCC faculty roundtables”

“Not being able to interact with presenters.”

Overall, the webinar/seminar series offered by the Ybor City Campus Learning Council was a success. Even though, at times, faculty felt the presentations were too long and did not provide enough interaction, the webinars offered a springboard for communication among faculty. Faculty were able to discuss their own techniques with other faculty allowing them to learn from each other.

**Evaluation:**

Survey Monkey and paper surveys were used to collect assessment data for the student learning outcomes. Webinars purchased by the mini-grant will continue to be used by faculty and adjuncts through the Ybor City Campus Faculty Resource Center and CITT.

The learning outcomes are as follows:

1) **Students will demonstrate the ability to use concept mapping.**
   
   a. By using a concept map, students have a visual tool to depict a set of ideas by linking them and explaining the connections. Concept maps provide a powerful way to help students organize, represent, and understand knowledge. Multiple suggested uses for concept maps were presented. Important Do’s and Don’ts when using concept mapping were discussed by faculty for use in their courses. Feedback will be discussed at Round Table Discussion during Campus In-Service.

2) **Students will demonstrate the ability to work effectively in a team.**
   
   a. Based on the feedback received from faculty, the webinar on collaborative teams provided faculty with various techniques to ensure successful collaborative learning. For instance, students learned to plan and delegate
assignments on a team project as well as receive different perspectives about the same topic.

3) Students will demonstrate improved critical thinking skills in problem solving.
   a. The feedback from faculty indicated that students were actively engaged in learning which promoted more critical thinking skills. Faculty used the techniques and suggestions from “10 Ways to Engage your Students” webinar to create a classroom environment that focused on the student and not the teacher. For instance, application was a key concept presented in this webinar. When faculty presented new topics, they would then assess. As indicated in the webinar, faculty should implement the “four step” plan: focus, present, apply, assess. This structured allowed for a focused and organized lesson that allowed for optimal critical thinking.

4) Students will be more engaged in classroom participation through active learning strategies and learner-centered teaching.
   a. Feedback from faculty also indicated a positive outcome in the classroom using active learning strategies. By using techniques from the “Learning-Centered Teaching – Where do I start” webinar, some faculty implemented the strategy of letting students summarize as opposed to the instructor. This technique promoted active involvement of students and critical thinking. Under prepared students’ retention and success will improve by utilizing proven retention and success strategies.
   b. Many faculty members had success by implementing specific organizational methods to increase students’ preparedness. For instance, these faculty members used focus activities at the beginning of class to focus students on learning. In addition, these faculty members used “to do” or “today we will” lists. These lists were visible the entire class. These two strategies decreased idle time at the beginning of class and also communicated to students the importance of planning and organizing.

Conclusion:

The Ybor City Campus Learning Council webinar series did have weaknesses; however, through faculty discussions and feedback, the Ybor City Campus Learning Council gained valuable insight in achieving successful student learning outcomes. The Ybor City Campus Learning Council has planned a new development series during the fall 2012 semester. This new development series will focus on faculty discussion allowing faculty immediate interaction with each other. Because of the success of discussions after the webinars, the council felt future development sessions should focus on discussion and not on presentation. This development series is a
direct result of the surveys received from faculty regarding the webinars offered during the 2011-2012 academic year.