

AANAPISI COURSE RELEASE PROPOSAL TEMPLATE

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Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI)

No more than three single-spaced pages, in 12 point Times New Roman font.

Title: *COMM Center Writing Consultants*

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Project Abstract:

Writing Consultants tutor online and in-person through the COMM Center. They enroll in COMM 198, the Applied Activity requirement for the COMM Studies Major or Minor, and complete a total of fifty hours over the course of the semester. Students in the program are recruited from those who successfully completed COMM 100W with a B+ or higher. Writing Consultants must complete at least 50-hours of training, tutoring, writing, or publishing *The Bolt Magazine*, gaining work experience similar to that of a freelance writing consultant.

Project Background/Significance:

This project fosters a student-centered writing culture in the Communication Studies Department, as well as other departments served by our COMM 100W courses. Many Writing Consultants come from multi-lingual backgrounds, are non-native English speakers, transfer students, first-generation college students, and identify as Asian, Asian-American, Hispanic, Chicano/a, and multi-ethnic. This program tends to attract students who in the past have not been recognized for their writing skills. One of the main purposes of this project is to recognize and encourage under-represented students, hence the launch last year of *The Bolt Magazine*, an online magazine of flash non-fiction. Each issue of *The Bolt* has featured writing from SJSU students touching on issues of identity, race, class, gender, family, sexuality, death, loss, love, and more. Because the magazine is written primarily by and for SJSU students, it continues to build connections and community on campus.

Goals of the Grant:

- a. Assess and reorganize the existing writing support services at SJSU;
- b. Enable more data-based decision-making about student retention and graduation at SJSU;
- c. Develop, implement, and integrate proactive writing strategies; or
- d. Change the SJSU writing culture from a policy-driven approach to an action-oriented approach.

Literature Review:

This program draws upon the many writing-tutoring projects in higher education, but is unique in its incorporation of a student-run flash non-fiction magazine. Inspired by Collins, Brown, and Holum's "Cognitive Apprenticeship: Making thinking visible" (1991), this project piloted a new

model for peer writing tutoring at SJSU that uses the “cognitive apprenticeship” approach, incorporating “scaffolding, modeling, mentoring, and coaching [to] promote learning that occurs through social interactions involving negotiation of content, understanding, and learner needs” (Dennen & Jonassen, 2004).

Project Description:

The Writing Consultants will complete ten hours of training at the beginning of the semester and then be assigned a weekly tutoring shift. This project will change in the spring through the implementation of a new online scheduling application. The new scheduling protocol will change the way students will make appointments with Writing Consultants and offer new ways to assess those appointments. A new issue of *The Bolt Magazine* will be published in the spring with a culminating print anthology. The Writing Consultants will publicize and judge *The Bolt* contest, as well as copyedit and publish the issue through Wordpress at theboltmagazine.com.

Project Method/Design:

The project will keep to the same design as the past with the noted change above of new appointment protocol. We continue to expand our social media community building resources and expect that further opportunities to change how we recruit and publicize the project will arise from social media.

Project Timeline:

Recruitment: 20 hours, completed by January 31st

Training: 10 hours, completed by February 15th

Mentoring: 10+/-week, completed by May 15th

The Bolt Contest publicity: 10 hours, completed by April 1st

The Bolt judging: 30 hours (shared task by the Writing Consultants), April 15th

The Bolt editorial production: 30 hours (task shared with Writing Consultants), May 1st

The Bolt reception: 5 hours (including publicizing, set-up, and event), May 10th

Final meeting with Writing Consultants: 2 hours, May 15th

Assessment of projects and performance: 8 hours, May 22nd

Necessary Expenses:

Refreshments for *The Bolt* reception, Spartan Bookstore gift certificates, and a print budget

Potential Contribution for Improvement of Student Success:

This project helps more than 250 students each semester with their writing. Of that population, a significant percentage of those students are non-native English speakers, first generation college students, transfer students, identifying within the demographics of Asian, Asian-American, Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Latino/a, Chicano/a, and multi-ethnic. Many students who receive tutoring from Writing Consultants apply to become part of the COMM Center community. Not only is this program assisting students with their academic skills, but it builds community within the university, which increases student success.

References

Collins, A., Brown, J. S. & Holum, A. (1991). Cognitive apprenticeship: Making thinking visible. *American Educator*, 15(3), 6-11, 38-46.

Dennen, V.P. (2004). Cognitive apprenticeship in educational practice: Research on scaffolding, modeling, mentoring, and coaching as instructional strategies. In D.H. Jonassen (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Educational Communications and Technology* (pp. 813-828) (2nd ed.) Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.