

To: CSM BSI Committee
FROM: Lorena G. del Mundo
DATE: July 20, 2009
RE: On Course Workshop Summary

I attended the On Course Workshop from June 1-4, 2009 at the Mercy Center in Burlingame, CA through Basic Skills Initiative funding. I found the experience to be very worthwhile and definitely an investment in my professional development as both a counselor and instructor in my workings with basic skills students and even in my new role as BSI Co-Coordinator. The 4 day workshop focused on ‘learner-centered structures for helping students learn more deeply and empowerment strategies for helping students become active, responsible learners who can thrive in a learner –centered environment’. As I was hoping, this workshop provided me with various practical ideas, strategies and activities that supplemented my Research Pedagogy Project from Spring 2009 in that I was able to come away with multiple examples of theory into practice.

Through small group, large group and individual reflection activities, the facilitators focused on Dr. Downing’s eight essential strategies for student success: 1. Personal responsibility, 2. Self-motivation, 3. Self-management, 4. Interdependence, 5. Self-awareness, 6. Life-long learning, 7. Emotional intelligence and 8. Belief in themselves. Each strategy was explained, discussed and had practical activities/exercises that supported the strategy. I especially found this piece useful as an instructor for CRER 120 and CRER 105. For example, I learned of the ‘popcorn’ reading which allows for students to take turns reading out loud...however, the students take the initiative themselves to decide when to read and thus it is not the instructor selecting...demonstrating student ownership in their own education (Personal Responsibility). I also liked something called Student Success Team in which students are grouped at the beginning of the semester and are to support each other in regards to complying with the syllabus in regards to assignments, tests, homework , notes, etc.(Interdependence and Self-Management).

As a counselor, I plan on utilizing the “Guiding Wise Choices” process to assists students in coming up with their own options and solutions to the problems they may encounter. I sometimes find myself ‘giving advice’ instead of guiding the student into finding options for themselves and the Guiding Wise Choices will be very beneficial to me in my role as a counselor.

Overall, it was definitely an opportunity full of experiences that will assist me in my role as Counselor and Instructor in working with basic skills students as well as in my role as BSI Co-Coordinator as I share strategies I have learned with various faculty. Thank you for your support.