Project proposal for the AANAPISI Grant, 2014-2015:

Improving the Teaching and
Assessment of Student Writing in GE Courses
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Project History:
For the last two academic years, the AANAPISI Grant has funded a project a project to improve the teaching and assessment of student writing in GE Courses at San Jose State University. During the 2012 - 2013 academic year, the culminating product of that project was a manual titled "Providing Feedback on Student Writing" that details the best practices for assessing student writing. During the 2013 - 2014 academic year, the information in that manual is being broadcast in a series of professional development workshops for GE faculty, through the Center for Faculty Development.

Current Project Summary:
The following proposal, for the 2014 – 2015 academic year, contains three objectives: 1) to continue the professional development workshops given in 2013 – 2014, 2) to provide follow-up support for participants of the previous workshops, and 3) to expand the reach of this support through department-based and individual-based training.

Need for the Project:
Objective 1: *Continue "Feedback" workshops*
As of today's date, there have been two "Providing Feedback on Student Writing" workshops, and a third workshop is scheduled for April 24th. Approximately 30 faculty have attended the first two workshops (capped at 20 each), and the third is sold out. At this point, faculty that want this support are being turned away. The second and third workshops contain colleagues from participants of the first workshop, and attendees span approximately 13 different departments across campus. This evidence suggests that more workshops are needed not only to meet demand, but to capitalize on the potential galvanized by the first few workshops.

Objective 2: *Provide follow-up support*
Participants need follow-up support after they have begun to employ the practices discussed in the workshop. They need someone to answer questions that arise and/or provide further pedagogical assistance as they navigate the learning curve.

Objective 3: Expand the reach of support
Each workshop participant has completed an anonymous survey, and of those responses, many have indicated that they want support with providing feedback on student writing that is department-specific. Furthermore, approximately 80% have indicated that they would like additional information on rubric and/or prompt creation, which logically aligns with potential department-based workshops. Conducting discipline-specific workshops could be very effective in not only disseminating this information, but helping to institutionalize some common practices

and consistent evaluation rubrics within departments. Additionally, many faculty have asked for one-on-one assistance with writing-related pedagogy. These instructors consist of both workshop participants and those who could not attend due to scheduling conflicts. Making time to help the dedicated instructors that are seeking it seems a worthwhile pursuit.

 Nearly all the participants of the workshop have given it a 4 or 5 (out of 5) for helpfulness, and have written comments like "Loved the workshop. Well worth the time" or "Work with new WAC director to institutionalize for writing intensive courses." The effectiveness of the workshop, in addition to an interested and untapped audience, suggests that continuing with this work will yield even greater faculty and student success.

PROJECT DESIGN:

Location:
The Center for Faculty Development was created to host professional development activities and is the ideal location to continue the workshops. Department-based and individual-based meetings will vary, depending on the mutually agreed upon location.

Workshop Content:
The one hour workshop will braid PowerPoint slides with hands-on activities that are based on the assessment practices in "Providing Feedback on Student Writing." Specifically, faculty will be given best practices for making in-text marks, end comments, and rubrics. Participants will examine multiple pre-created samples of the same piece of student writing that have each been marked up by a different strategy. After discussing both the instructor and student outcomes for the various types of feedback in the samples, faculty will have the chance to assess an unmarked sample of student writing in groups. The discussion that follows will again examine the outcomes of marking methods, but will largely focus on discerning what errors most affect clarity and readability in the piece.
Faculty will also be asked to bring one of their assignment prompts – and a rubric, if they have one – for a group discussion about the components of these vital documents, and the cohesion between them and instructor feedback. If possible, instructors will receive a free copy of *The Everyday Writer*; they will also receive a copy of "Providing Feedback on Student Writing." At the end of the 1 hour session there will be a quick survey, using clickers, to determine what was most and least helpful to the participants. Outside of the workshop I will make myself available by email, phone, or in-person to help instructors with any questions they may have about assessing student writing.

Advertising:
 The workshops may be advertised on the Center for Faculty Development's website, as well as through electronic and paper flyers similar to those used for the AANAPISI writing workshops. For the department-based workshops/meetings, department chairs will be contacted, in person, to discuss needs and possibilities.

Schedule:
Fall 2014:
- ➢ "Providing Feedback on Student Writing" – 2 workshops at CFD
- ➢ Meet with department chairs; schedule and prepare for department-based workshops; host department-based workshops if mutual scheduling allows
- ➢ Ongoing support and meetings with individual faculty

Spring 2015:
- ➢ "Providing Feedback on Student Writing" – 2 workshops at CFD
- ➢ Meet with department chairs; schedule and prepare for department-based workshops; host department-based workshops
- ➢ Ongoing support and meetings with individual faculty

Requested release time (per semester): 0.4

Thank you for your consideration,
Sara Cook