

2007 January CASTL Report  
College of San Mateo

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**\* Theme within which the institutional team is working and location of the 2007 theme meeting**

Liberal Education: Core Curriculum

The location of the 2007 meeting is still under discussion

**\* Description of the work which the institution will accomplish during the coming year**

CSM will focus its action and scholarship on “Writing Across the Curriculum”—a powerful concept often difficult to implement in community colleges. A team of writing coaches working with teaching faculty will develop strategies and tools to deal with the complex task of structuring writing assignments and identifying means of support for students who write at disparate levels. The SoTL project asks, can WAC function as a teaching and learning tool for below-college level writers who are enrolled, along with more advanced writers, in discipline courses with no writing prerequisite?

As of January, 2007, the proposed work is well underway, with the following items accomplished:

- 7 teaching instructors, with 17 sections involved, have worked weekly all fall semester with 6 coaching faculty, discussing and developing assignments, rubrics, policies, writing center support, workshop coaching support, comparative disciplinary writing guidelines for writing tutors, standardized proofreading and editing symbols, and diagnostic prompts. This intensive work has already fostered a rich culture of sharing and consultation already.
- Systems for making tutoring help available for students writing in disciplines other than English have been negotiated and arranged.
- Surveys and data collection programs have been designed and written for assessment purposes.
- A website for WAC work has been created.
- A template for ePortfolios, using Keep Toolkit, has been developed. It will provide material for assessing the Institutional Student Learning Outcomes as well as the writing outcomes of the WAC project.
- Through the development of a Sharepoint site, the entire college has been invited to follow the progress of the WAC and ePortfolio projects.
- The ePortfolio project has led to the creation of a digital learning tools consortium, CSM partnering with a number of CSU campuses and other community colleges, to develop a ePortfolio model with seamless portability in California higher education. CSM has played an active role in the consortium, hosting meetings and promoting the project in Washington, D.C. and New Orleans.

Thus the pilot project for WAC is ready to be launched with the beginning of Spring Semester on January 16, 2007.

The Teaching and Coaching Teams will continue to meet weekly to discuss their experiences, address problems, and refine the strategies developed in the fall. Their students will create ePortfolios to archive their writing, which we will study methodically after the end of the semester and document our findings. We will also collect information through surveys and other studies.

We will continue to work with the ePortfolio Consortium with the purpose of creating an instrument that may open up new discussion about writing, learning, and teaching, even across transfer boundaries.

**\* Articulation of any changes in the institutional plan or structure brought about as a result of the November 2006 meeting**

There were no changes directly as a result of the meeting; however, the opportunity to attend the ISSOTL conference did result in the team developing new understanding of the need for a sophisticated, intentional program of faculty development to sustain and broaden the effects of our WAC initiative and integrative learning on the campus. Inspired by a Maricopa presentation, we are discussing the possibility of starting a faculty development program based on the CASTL Scholars Program. Also, as active participants in our campus Architectural Master Plan development process, we are articulating the need for designated physical space for a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Program and an Integrative Learning Center.

**\* Any reflection on the November 2006 meeting**

The limited time to get to know the other institutions in our group made us eager for a longer session to explore the possibilities of our collaboration. Perhaps more preliminary planning might facilitate progress at future meetings. Specifically, an initial proposal of future activities and meetings would enable the group to respond and shape the form of our work together more quickly.

**\* Local website URL dedicated to sharing work of the CASTL Institutional Leadership Program**

<http://www.smccd.edu/accounts/csmwac/>