Final Report for Curriculum Development Grant
New IU Course: Spanish S116: Second Semester Spanish with Review

1. Description of grant-supported activity

Thanks to the Curriculum Development Grant, the summer EON course was successfully piloted during Summer II, 2005. The course included 2nd semester content while reviewing learning strategies relevant to successful second language acquisition, a review of 1st semester materials, a laboratory section that provided activities tailored to specific skills gaps/strengths, and mentoring for new/at-risk students.

2. Were you able to complete the project? Describe any difficulty you had.

The primary difficulty was the approval process. Since the course was new to the IU system, the course was not approved and scheduled until May 31, 2005. Final enrollment for the course was 15 students. In contrast, the same course for the Summer II, 2006 term has already enrolled 15 students at the start of the Summer I term.

The student evaluations and student performance in this course were positive indicators of how SPAN S116 will support students who must complete the language requirement. Students were clearly content to receive electives credits for strengthening their skills in first year language (if they had simply repeated the same course number, they would not have added to their total credit count). In addition, two of the 15 students have chosen to enter the Spanish program due to the “jumpstart” that the summer class afforded them during their first year at IUSB.

Student evaluations are generally positive. The students that complained about the course organization were academically under-prepared students, as demonstrated by placement scores and transcripts. I will continue to work on improving delivery options that lend themselves to individualized, active learning strategies. In Summer 2006, I will offer some “buffet” options to completion of assignments to better suit different learning styles (take an online quiz versus complete a workbook assignment versus give a short oral presentation).
3. Did, or will, the project result in a specific product — a manuscript, composition, syllabus, etc? If so, please describe and indicate state of development.

The project has resulted in a syllabus that I plan to develop into a course guide. The goal of the course guide is to support students who wish to "test out" of our first year language courses through self study or review. Then, I am seeking to create an online or hybrid version of SPAN S116 so that students who require minimal faculty support can complete the course without committing to a face-to-face class schedule.

I am planning a manuscript after this summer focusing on the experience of at-risk, first-year students. I seek to argue that instead of remedial courses that separate an at-risk cohort in pre-college level courses, students may be as well or better supported by a mixed student demographic in course. I will also seek to delineate the strategies that were most successful for these first-year students.