

Faculty and Staff Diversity Mini-Grant Final Report

Project title : Mobile Assistive Technology Program

Grant Recipients: Julie Rudolph

Date Project Started: August 25, 2014

Amount of Money Funded by the Mini-Grant \$3355.20

1. How was the grant used to address a diversity or inclusion related goal?

Students with disabilities may face many and varied barriers while pursuing a college education. Some of those barriers can be overcome through the use of assistive technology. Many students with disabilities are less disadvantaged in this technological age than they were ten to twenty years ago. However, another barrier is in place for students who are non-traditional and/or are low socio-economic status. Through this Diversity Mini Grant, Educational Counseling & Disabilities Services (ECDS) was able to purchase five iPads and six Smart Pens and accessories that are available to check out to students registered with ECDS on a first come/first serve basis. The iPad has a number of applications available that may be helpful to all students and students with disabilities in particular. One of these applications is Learning Ally which allows students to download audio versions of textbooks. Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) companies also have applications for the iPad. These companies supply sign language interpreters on demand via an internet connection. The Smart Pen allows students to sync a recording of the lecture to written notes. The pen records and plays back a recording of the lecture. ECDS ordered three Echo Smart Pens and three Sky Smart Pens. The Echo Smart Pen can also be connected to a computer through a USB connection to upload notes and recording to the Livescribe website so that students may review notes and listen to the lecture on the computer. The Sky Smart Pen wirelessly connects uploads notes automatically through a Wifi connection to the Evernote website which serves the same function as the Livescribe website. It was the hope of ECDS to improve the academic performance of some students with disabilities by providing access to these technologies.

2. Describe the audience that was impacted by the grant's implementation. Provide quantitative data, if available.

During Fall 2014, five students registered with ECDS participated in the program. These five are considered the pilot group as ECDS plans to continue this program and make improvements. All of these students were white females. Their ages ranged from 18 to 36 with a mean age of 23. One student was a freshman and did not have a GPA prior to the semester. The other four

starting GPAs ranged from 2.12 to 3.46 with a mean GPA of 2.67. One student checked out an iPad for fall semester. The other four checked out Smart Pens.

The student who checked out an iPad was a 36 year old white female. Her cumulative GPA prior to the fall 2014 semester was 2.56. Her fall 2014 semester GPA was 1.80. Her current cumulative GPA is 2.49. This student specifically used the Learning Ally application for the iPad to get audio books. In her follow-up, she attributes 80% of her success to using Learning Ally on her iPad.

One student who checked out a Smart Pen was a 22 year old white female. Her cumulative GPA prior to the fall 2014 semester was 3.46. Her fall 2014 semester GPA was 3.46. Her current cumulative GPA is 3.46. This student experienced problems uploading notes from the pen to the Evernote website. The student stopped using the pen at that point. The student also thought that she no longer needed to use the pen as she started taking medication to improve her focus. This student attributed 0% of her success to the Smart Pen.

Another student who checked out a Smart Pen was a 19 year old white female. Her cumulative GPA prior to the fall 2014 semester was 2.12. Her fall 2014 semester GPA was 2.91. Her current cumulative GPA is 2.42. This student reported in her follow-up that the Smart Pen did help her to get ahead in the beginning of the semester; however she also found the computer software difficult to use. This student attributed 50% of her success to the use of the Smart Pen.

Another student who checked out a Smart was a 20 year old white female. Her cumulative GPA prior to the fall 2014 semester was 2.55. Her fall 2014 semester GPA was 1.82. Her cumulative GPA is 2.41. This student reported in her follow-up that the pen helped her because she did not have to take as many notes. She could listen to the recording later and write more notes if needed. This student reported some difficulty with getting the pen initially set up but no problems after that. This student attributed 95% of her success to the use of the Smart Pen.

There was one freshman who checked out a Smart Pen. This student was an 18 year old white female. Her fall 2014 semester GPA and her current cumulative GPA is 1.26. She used the pen very little as she did not find her classes to be "lecture heavy". She also reported that the pen took too long to get registered. This student attributed 0% of her success to the use of the Smart Pen.

- 3. Grant recipients are required to provide a short narrative that details the specific efforts each of the collaborators made to the implementation of the grant.**

All of the ECDS counselors have taken a role in the implementation of this program. Julie Rudolph and Kimberly Dickman referred students to the program and assisted them with using the technology. Kelli Cummings referred a hearing impaired student to the program for the use of VRI for the spring 2015 semester. Marie Yowitz is working with the student who used the iPad to create a series of workshops to introduce students to different applications on the iPad starting with Learning Ally.

- 4. What is your overall assessment of the project’s impact on the Ferris community? How did this impact compare to what you expected?**

The first semester of this program has revealed challenges that ECDS will need to address. The intent of this project is to raise the GPAs of participants. Although the student who checked out the iPad was highly satisfied, her GPA did not increase. All of the students who checked out the Smart Pens reported technological problems with set up and/or uploading notes to the web. In addition to the iPad workshops, ECDS will also need to facilitate training specifically on using the Smart Pen.

- 5. Present a final budget including all funds received and spent related to the project, with special focus on the funds received via the Diversity Mini-grant.**

Budget	Est. Expenses (USD)
Apple® - iPad® 2 with Wi-Fi - 16GB – Black @ 5 x \$399.99	1,999.95
2 gb Sky Smart pen by livescribe @ 3 x \$170.00	510
2 gb Echo Smart pen by livescribe @ 3 x \$120.00	360
Livescribe Dot Paper Notebooks @ 6 x \$19.95	119.70
iPad Smart Case @ 5x \$39	195
Smart Pen Case @ 6 x \$24.95	149.70
Ink Cartridge Refill Pack @ 3 x 6.95	20.85
Total	3355.20

DocuSigned by:
Julie Rudolph
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Primary Grant Recipient's Signature _____

Date 2/6/15 _____