

Collaborative Partner: Central Valley Higher Education Consortium

Project #11: Dual Enrollment Teach Upskilling Pathway – MA degrees for English High School Teachers

Pathway(s): Upskilling Masters for Dual Enrollment

Project Summary

Central Valley Higher Education Consortium (CVHEC) with the Collaborative partners will be executing their proposal (attached) to address the need to develop a pool of high school teachers who hold master's degrees to teach community college dual enrollment English courses on local high school campuses.

As partners, National University and Fresno Pacific University are prepared to offer flexible rigorous online master's degree programs which, when completed, enable high school math and English teachers to achieve California community college minimum qualifications. Fresno Pacific plans to offer to Central Valley high school teachers with a bachelor's degree in mathematics an online M.A. degree program in mathematics education. Funding for this project would come from a different proposal.

National University would offer to Central Valley high school English teachers an online Master of Arts degree program in English. National has earned accolades for the strength of its respective well-established program. With this proposal, CVHEC is requesting funding from the Fresno K-16 Collaborative for this project to increase the number of high school English teachers qualified to teach dual enrollment English courses on their campuses.

The National online program would be offered in such a way as to provide flexibility for high school teachers, who already have extensive responsibilities, while at the same time providing a rigorous program in English. CVHEC further proposes working with National University and the K-16 Collaborative K-12 partners to find ways to:

- Create cohorts of master's candidates of approximately 15 to 20 students who would go through the program at the same time.
- Reduce the cost of tuition (which is already by nationwide standards reasonable) through various options, including, but not limited to, tuition reduction scholarships and fellowships.
- Encourage master's candidates to contribute to the cost of their tuition in such a way as to show commitment to the programs without putting undue financial strain on themselves or their families.

Finally, CVHEC proposes to work with member institutions to commence these online programs within the next 6 months.

The outcomes of this scope of work include:

- Enabling all high school students, especially disproportionately impacted students, the opportunity to successfully complete transferable college English courses in high school, thus accelerating their timeline to college completion and their overall success in college.
- Enabling high school English teachers with increased educational advancement in their disciplines, to increase their knowledge, skills, and overall capacity for the benefit of all of their students.
- Providing salary advancement opportunities for these teachers within their school districts as well as increased opportunities to teach college courses on community college campuses.
- Providing CVHEC community colleges with an increased pool of adjunct English professors from which to draw.

This approach can be replicated throughout the nine-county CVHEC region on a more limited basis in the Fresno K-16 Collaborative service area as identified in its “Fresno K-16 Collaborative Overview & Work Plan” in one of its prioritized pathways (Education – Dual Enrollment Teachers - Master’s degrees for high school teachers to teach dual enrollment).

Project Progress Report

To date, National University and CVHEC engaged in an expedited recruitment that led to identifying 19 candidates for cohort 1.0 of English high school teachers pursuing a master’s degree through the upskilling project. National University held virtual recruitment sessions in the fall of 2020. Applications were received and evaluated to develop the first cohort. Candidates represented the four districts listed below and the Office of the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools.

The cohort of 19 members attended their first class in January 2021. Since then, two of the cohort have had to leave for personal family reasons. Reports from remaining cohort members indicates a high level of enthusiasm and satisfaction with the program.

Fresno USD – 2 (Started with 3)
Sanger USD - 4
Clovis USD – 9 (Started with 10)
Central USD - 2
FCSS – 0 (Started with 1)

Community College professors have been recruited and selected to serve as mentors for the high school teachers. Each high school teacher has a mentor assigned to her/him.

Currently, National University is engaged in recruitment for the second cohort for teachers from the school districts above. This cohort will include 25 students. Community College

professors are also being recruited currently to serve as mentors for the members of the second cohort.