

Project Name:	Increase TA Resources in CALS
MIU Round:	Round 2
Sponsor(s):	College of Agricultural and Life Sciences
Coordinator(s):	Dan Schaefer, Former Interim Associate Dean, Sarah Pfatteicher, Associate Dean, Philip Gonsiska, Assistant Dean
Report Date:	Year 1, July 2011; Year 2, July 2012; Year 3, July 2013

Project Specific Goal and Measures

Project Impact Measure(s)	Utilize eight funded TA FTE lines to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access for undergraduates in agricultural and life sciences education by increasing capacity in bottleneck courses and decreasing the instructor:student ratio. • Enhance the learning environment in CALS by implementing high-impact practices to achieve essential learning outcomes. • Reduce achievement gaps between all students and targeted minority groups.
Project Impact Data Source(s)	College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Baseline Measure(s)	2009-10 enrollment capacity, instructor: staff ratios, and participation in high impact practices.

General MIU Goals and Measures (applicable to project)

A	Increased access in bottleneck areas	Increase access to the following courses, including the following: Microbiology 102 and 304; Animal Science/Dairy Science 101, 361/363 and 434; Entomology 302; and Food Science 324.
C	Increased capacity for high-impact practices	Survey instructors of CALS courses about the use of high-impact practices in their courses including opportunities for students to: engage in active learning; engage in group or team-based learning; and integrate learning in and out of the classroom.

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D	Increased student learning and teaching excellence	Covered in project goals (implementation of high impact practices). In addition, the increased TA support increased the office hours available to students and shorten the response time to students who were having problems or had questions. The addition of TA support to a large lecture course allowed exams to be administered more frequently throughout the semester (rather than 2 large exams that counted for almost the whole grade). Other instructors were able to implement new lab activities, assign homework that they wouldn't otherwise have had time to review, and increase the time spent discussing course content.
F	Decreased achievement gaps	CALS has learned about achievement gaps in CALS courses and is in the process of addressing these gaps, particularly in Nutritional Science 132. CALS will compare the achievement gap measured prior to adding the TA support to after the implementation of TAs to see if any reductions in the achievement gap are observed.
H	Unintended benefits	The College of Engineering welcomed CALS TAs to their already-existing training program (NEO – New Educators Orientation) resulting in a new partnership between Engineering and CALS.

Progress Reports

Year 1, 2010-11	<p>Due to the timing of the notification of the project award relative to the start of the academic year, staffing and curricular innovations were not completely implemented in 2010-11.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Realized enrollment increases and/or increases in the number of course sections in bottleneck courses. In nine courses, enrollment increased 10% and the number of subsections increased by 20.• Realized an increase (as reported by course instructors) in their ability to utilize high impact practices. 89% of primary instructors reported that the MIU-funded TA enabled them to implement one or more high impact practices.
Year 2, 2011-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addressed course bottleneck issues by offering more sections of courses with TA support for a net increase of 16 sections and a 10% increase in enrollment.• Surveyed instructors about their capacity to help students with essential learning outcomes relevant to their courses. Compared to pre-MIU benchmarks, most courses reported increases in their abilities to provide better learning outcomes for students.• Compared the D, F, Drop rate in a required CALS course before and after the addition of TA support. The TA support in this class was used to reduce instructor/student ratios and focus on student writing. Prior to the TA support, this course had a relatively large difference in the percentage of D, F, and Drops for targeted minority students compared to non-targeted students. After the addition of the TA support, the gap disappeared.

Year 3, 2012-13

- Added TA support to sections of 45 different courses.
 - Compared the D, F, Drop rate in a required CALS course before and after the addition of TA support in Year 2. The TA support in this class was used to reduce instructor/student ratios and focus on student writing. Prior to the TA support, this course had a relatively large difference in the percentage of D, F, and Drops for targeted minority students compared to non-targeted students. After the addition of the TA support, the gap disappeared for the last two years.
 - Surveyed instructors about their capacity to help students with essential learning outcomes relevant to their courses. Compared to pre-MIU benchmarks, most courses reported increases in their abilities to provide better learning outcomes for students.
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