UA Initiative for the Development of Online Programs

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Program Title: Project Reach III: Reaching Out and Expanding Access to Coursework in Human Development

Project Description
At the University of Arizona, the Division of Family Studies and Human Development (FSHD) in the Norton School of Family and Consumer Sciences provides undergraduate education and training to students pursuing future careers in social and community services as well as health- and education-related fields. FSHD currently has one of the most viable and productive undergraduate programs in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Fall 2010 figures indicate that FSHD has close to 500 majors and over 100 minors. On average, FSHD awards 100 BS degrees per year and ranks 16th in degree output out of 146 majors campus-wide.

What was accomplished?
Five upper division courses were converted to an online format with two (FSHD 447c and 487) being offered this summer, with three (FSHD 413, 427a, 447a) being offered during the academic year 2011-2012. All five courses are prepared to undergo the peer review for Quality Matters as part of their conversion from “live” to “online” learning environments. These courses will be offered in conjunction with the new pilot distance program with Arizona Western College (AWC) which will allow place-bound students in the Yuma area to complete a Bachelors of Science in FSHD through the Norton School.

Assessment
Our assessment plan for the project focuses on student outcomes and instructor preparedness. Student outcomes assessment will address computer literacy, experience with our newly formed online course offerings, and assessment of student learning via pre- and post-tests of course specific content knowledge. Instructor preparedness assessment will focus on training in pedagogy of learner centered teaching methods, comfort with D2L as an online learning environment, and computer literacy. The goal of these assessments is to allow the department the ability to ensure top quality teaching and learning environments for students and teachers.

Goals
The purpose is to extend work conducted under two previous projects (REACH I & II) to further increase access to coursework in FSHD. Our goal is to convert 5 upper division courses to online format in order to better serve students in our large and growing residential program. The courses to be developed include FSHD 413 (Issues in Aging), FSHD 427a (Problems in Adult Development & Relationships), FSHD 447a &c (Sociocultural Context of Development & Biosocial Development), and FSHD 487 (Advanced Family Relations). Once complete, ALL upper division required content courses in the major will be available online.

Future Plans
Upon completion of the initial offering of these courses, evaluation data will allow the Norton School to make necessary changes and improvements to online courses offered within the FSHD major. In addition, instructor preparation will be evaluated and improved as necessary based on instructor assessments. This will allow the Norton School to move forward with the land-grant mission of serving the state at large through online course offerings of the highest caliber.

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