

## **TIGERS Grant Report:**

**Project Description:** **TIGERS GRANT AB422 E-Text Initiative** Research was a grant written to assist CSU Disabilities Resource Services (DRCS) and CSU Instructional Professionals in comprehending the requirements of Assembly Bill 422 and how best to meet the requirements, serve the needs of the students, and provide such service with limited staff and budget. The first meeting of the project team in person was at the CAPED conference. This initial meeting laid the foundation for the working group and set the tone for the investigation. The project team consisted of members from CSU Fullerton (Jeff Senge), CSU Long Beach (Penny Peterson), and CSU Hayward (Mary Cheng, Anne Judd, and Jeniffer Wellington).

Initially, a survey the project team designed and distributed to the CSU campuses for response. The data from the survey will be part of the final project presentation. The project yielded important information and concerns from the SDRC and IT service providers. It was determined that not every campus would be able to comply with the requirements of AB422 which, in essence, state that an electronic or text equivalent must be provided to students as if they had the standard text book. This requires that textbooks be scanned into a text reader, scanned and converted to Braille, scanned and converted to an audio file such as a .WAV or .MP3. It was also identified that we still have problems providing electronic text or equivalent at every campus, and some texts cannot be easily reproduced.

**What Worked:** The most successful aspect of the project was that it brought the CSU together to deal with a common issue that affects each campus. We were able to identify the legal requirement, the resources available, and the challenges faced with trying to comply with AB422. We were able to determine which campuses had equipment that could be used to convert text; able to determine which campuses had policies and procedures that would go to establishing Best Practices for complying with AB422. We were also able to use this opportunity to address the Chancellor's office with our concerns and questions. This was a great opportunity for Disability Resource providers to meet and to gain common understanding of the challenges and benefits of working under AB422. We obtained valid and valuable data that will provide the platform for the future of CSU and AB422.

**Challenges:** The least successful aspect of the project was coordinating the distribution of funds and getting the administrative part of the support chain to comply with grant outlines and pay according to the grant. Paying the contractors for services rendered was problematic because the project team was composed of staff from four CSU campuses. Paying out across entities has proved to be challenging, but a great learning experience. Travel costs were greater than initially expected. However, we were still able to stay within budget. Finding time to manage the grant and participate was difficult for me, but other team members were able to participate. As campuses from the North and South participated, we were required to have non-centralized meetings via telephone conference. Members were required to travel to district meetings and a regional conference.

**Hindsight:** I have been asked to write for a grant to develop the second stage of the project which is to now determine which of the best practices can be followed by which campuses. Having played more of an administrative part of the grant than an active part, I know that the information we gathered in the initial stage is very valuable. I also know that administering a grant is more tedious than participating in the grant. I'd be willing to write for another grant, but not administer it. It required a great deal of time tracking paperwork, getting project data back, getting the information posted, and coordinating the paying out of the grant items. I'd write the grant with better definition of duties, and would write in a project management fee, if possible, to facilitate compensating someone for the amount of time it takes to keep track of the project expenses and progress.

However, overall, the project was a great experience. The information and resources identified in the grant will definitely help the CSU as an entity in dealing with the issue of providing equivalent information for disabled students.

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**Project Description:** **TIGERS GRANT Student Assistants** Research grant was initiated to help determine how CSU campuses deal with recruiting, hiring, and maintaining student technology workers. In the face of budget cuts and unfilled IT staff positions, it is imperative that a method of supporting instructional and information technology be determined. Having successfully instituted an IT Student Leadership program at CSU Hayward, I was interested to find how many other campuses had a training path for their student IT workers.

Initial research consisted constructing a survey that was distributed to the CATS list. Of the 23 campuses in CSU, 14 campuses responded to the survey. Although only 14 campuses responded, I received 21 individual responses. The survey results were presented during an Horizon Live event. The Horizon Live event had a good number of initial participants initially, but the participation quickly dropped off. The final four participants asked questions about the data and the research project. These questions are archived with the HL session.

**What Worked:** The most positive aspect of the research was that it validated my claim that IT can be and is largely supported by student workers. What I found most interesting about the data is that off all respondents, very few actually have actual job descriptions or a path for promotion for their student workers. Another interesting fact that validated the program I have initiated at CSUH is that no other campus has a tiered leadership program or hierarchy of student worker. Many of the respondents were interested in how to construct a good job description, how to determine a fair wage, and how to acquire and retain quality student technology workers. We were able to share our strategies, our successes, and our challenges.

**Challenges:** The most challenging aspect of the project was having time to do site seminars. I had undertaken the challenge to write for a TIGERS grant for another issue, and found that the other grant took up more time than I had anticipated. I feel that my

personal project suffered. Otherwise, whatever challenges that presented themselves seem insignificant.

**Hindsight:** Looking back, I would have written for one grant only and had more quality time. Further, I would like to have had more time to visit the campuses that responded with relevant data. Fortunately, based upon the data, a seminar was less valuable at this stage than would be after the data is shared at CATS. My program at CSUH has been very successful and will become more valuable in light of the budget cuts, retiring professionals, and unfilled positions. Since the inception of the Student Technology Service Center Student Leadership program, we have successfully helped four of our former students move into staff positions within the university in the areas of Instructional and Information technology. It is our hope to provide a consistent pathway for our students to obtain the necessary training and familiarity with higher educational technology needs and resources, as well as being able train our future subordinates and peers. In closing, I would like to emphasize that even though I feel as though I could have accomplished more had I had more time, I know that what I achieved is more than what previously existed. That is a big plus. Although I set out on one path, or course of action, the journey took me along a path of discovery which provided information anyone in the system may use.