

# AANAPISI Grant Annual Report

## Executive Summary

The purpose of the legislation that established the Title III-A and III-F is to “improve the academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability of eligible institutions, in order to increase their self-sufficiency and strengthen their capacity to make a substantial contribution to the higher education resources of the Nation.”

### SECTION A

This section summarizes how the grant enabled the institution to fulfill the legislative intent of the Title III - Part F program.

The AANAPISI Team members have been working on meeting our Year 2 goals. This report represents a summary of our achievements to date. All of these activities contribute significantly in fulfilling the goals of our AANAPISI writing grant.

1. Goal 1: Assess and reorganize the existing writing support services at SJSU
  - Designed, disseminated and analyzed an AAPI student survey in designated intervention courses for key demographics, writing experience and student success measures.
  - Completed an inventory of all services and initiatives available for AAPI students at SJSU.
  - Based on the external evaluation of our writing support services and as part of the effort to prioritize writing instruction at SJSU, three new professor positions were created that will change the structure of writing at SJSU.
    - A STRETCH Program Coordinator who will oversee this program that gives students two semesters to meet the freshmen composition requirements.
    - A Writing Program Administrator who will coordinate the first-year writing programs.
    - A Writing Across the Curriculum Director who will aim to create some uniformity in the upper-division writing courses that are offered in different departments.
2. Goal 2: Enable more data-based decision-making about student retention and graduation at SJSU.
  - SJSU’s Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics continues to provide SJSU with informative data regarding our retention and graduation rates for our AAPI students.

- For our 6-year graduation rates, we do disaggregate into AAPI subpopulations. For our Fall 2007 cohort, our AAPI six-year graduation rate was 50.5% compared to 46.2% campus-wide. However, in disaggregating the AAPI data for sub-AAPI cohorts greater than 100 students, our Filipino six-year graduation cohort for 2007 is 43.4%. For transfers, our freshmen 2007 six-year graduation rate was 66.8% campus-wide, but 64.4% for our AAPI cohort. For sub-AAPI cohorts greater than 100 students, Chinese and Filipino students were below the campus-wide percentage at 63.7% and 64.2%, respectively. Given this data, we have conducted focus groups with AAPI clubs and AAPI students who have visited the Writing Center to determine how SJSU can help them graduate from SJSU.
- We also have completed a literature review of key studies on AAPI educational excellence and academic success.
- In summary, our team has made significant progress in conducting research and data collection on our AAPI student population and their needs in terms of writing and educational achievement.

### 3. Goal 3: Develop, implement, and integrate proactive writing strategies.

- Curriculum Development and Implementation
  - Six faculty members from the Department of General Engineering continued to refine and teach Engineering 81W, a freshmen writing intensive course. During this review period, 240 students have enrolled in this course. Although the majority of students showed levels of writing improvement, further assessments show an ongoing need to improve essay organization, grammar skills and writing fluency.
  - Eight faculty members from the Department of Communication Studies participated in writing-related activities through curriculum development and writing support. Over 289 students participated in their writing intensive course, Comm 80. Faculty members trained 15 peer writing consultants for the new Communication Center and coordinated their online writing magazine, “Bolt” (<http://theboltmagazine.com>) in which over 50 students submitted original non-fiction writings.
  - Three faculty members in the Department of English were involved with this project. One provided a faculty workshop of developing holistic writing scoring guidelines (11 participants). Another faculty member developed a handbook called “Providing Feedback on Student Writing” as well as developed a professional writing workshop for General Education faculty. The third faculty member reviewed the curriculum design of our upper division writing course for students who fail our writing skills test.
  - Two faculty members from the Department of Secondary Education continued to develop their academic writing seminar for graduate-level English Language Learners in the College of Education.

- One faculty member from the Department of Meteorology and Climate Science conducted a research project to monitor and compare how much Meteorology students improve their writing in an upper division writing class and graduate level class.
  - Faculty Writing Workshops
    - The goal of the AANAPISI Faculty Writing Workshop is to improve the quality of writing instruction across the campus. To date, 31 faculty representing many disciplines at SJSU have participated in these workshops. Twenty lesson plans have been created and posted on our AANAPISI website (<http://www.sjsu.edu/aanapisi>). These lesson plans have been downloaded 142 times.
  - University Writing Center
  - The University Writing Center continues to be an active player in the AANAPISI project. Here are some highlights, in addition to the Faculty Professional Workshops noted above:
    - The grant supported seven student Writing Specialists to work in the Writing Center.
    - During this report period, the student Writing Specialists met one-on-one with 1,753 students who made a total of 4,139 appointments.
    - One faculty-in-residence assisted 53 students with writing resumes, cover letters and personal statements.
    - Another faculty-in-residence coordinated the Writing Skills Test at SJSU, a junior-level mandatory writing test. She also presented a holistic scoring workshop for eleven instructors.
    - One faculty and staff member developed and implemented reading comprehension workshops. Four workshops were offered in the Spring/Summer 2013 with a total of 22 students attending.
    - Five focus groups have been conducted. Two focus groups were conducted with the students using the Writing Center while three were conducted with AAPI students via student organizations regarding their writing experiences and participation in Writing Center activities.
    - A Writing Center staff member maintains the AANAPISI website ([www.sjsu.edu/aanapisi](http://www.sjsu.edu/aanapisi)). To date, this site has been viewed 1,190 times.
4. Goal 4: Change the SJSU writing culture from a policy driven approach to an action-oriented approach.
- The Writing Excellence Committee on October 15, 2012 and on May 13, 2013. The primary focus of these meetings was to review our progress to date and

discuss our future initiatives. At the May 13, 2013 meeting, the faculty reported out on their projects to date (summarized above).

In conclusion, the grant evaluators have noted the tremendous progress of the grant team during the performance review period in terms of carrying out the designated activities, identifying impact in terms of outcome measures, and locating pathways to greatly impact AAPI students in terms of their writing success.

5. How has the grant helped to carry out the mission of the institution?
  - San Jose State University's Mission Statement: In collaboration with nearby industries and communities, SJSU faculty and staff are dedicated to achieving the university's mission as a responsive institution of the state of California: To enrich the lives of its students, to transmit knowledge to its students along with the necessary skills for applying it in the service of our society, and to expand the base of knowledge through research and scholarship.
  - Our AANAPISI project touches every aspect of our mission statement. Effective written communication skills are essential in enriching the lives of our students through developing their writing skills during their academic career at SJSU. We strategically continue to increase the writing opportunities and support services for students in a variety of ways across the undergraduate and graduate curricula. We also have begun to publish our work and give presentations at conferences.
    - The projects are listed in the previous section.
  - Technology and Civilization is an advanced general education course (Area V: Culture, Civilization & Global Understanding) in the College of Engineering at San José State University (SJSU). As part of the AANAPISI grant, this course evaluated the ETS Criterion Writing Evaluation System in Fall 2012 and Spring 2013. The Spring 2012 class was used as a control group. The hypothesis was that the use of ETS Criterion would improve students' writing in the class, therefore reducing the amount of time required to grade the students' research papers. Students completed four essays in the class: Research Exercise 1 draft paper, Research Exercise 1 final paper, Research Exercise 2 draft paper, and Research Exercise 2 final paper. For the Fall 2012 class, t-tests comparing the individual students' grammatical errors were significant. A t-test comparing the number of errors on Research Exercise 1 draft with Research Exercise 1 Final paper was significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). A t-test comparing the students' grammatical errors on the two papers for Research Exercise 2 was also significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). When comparing the student grades on their final essays between the Spring 2012 and Fall 2012, the grades on both Research Exercise 1 ( $p < 0.01$ ) and Research Exercise 2 ( $p < 0.01$ ) were significantly higher for students in the Fall 2012 class. The grades for the two research papers for the Spring 2013 students were also higher than Spring 2012 although the difference was not significant.

- Here is a summary of our dissemination activities:
  - Publication: Backer, P.R. (in press) “Effectiveness of an Online Writing System in Improving Students Writing Skills in Engineering”, *Computers in Education Journal*.
  - Conference Presentations:
    - Karathanos, Katya and Sidman-Taveau, Rebekah. “Writing Support for Graduate-Level English Learners” at the 2013 Northern Regional California Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages” on XX Date.
    - Hager, Michelle; Goodman, Jessie and Tucker, Andrew. “Running a Writing Center as a Business: Creating a Professional Tutoring Environment” at the Northern California Writing Centers Association 2013 Biannual Conference in Sacramento, CA in April 2013.
    - Backer, P.R. “Effectiveness of an Online Writing System in Improving Students’ Writing Skills in Engineering”, *Proceedings of the 2013 ASEE Meeting*.
    - Fassett, Deanna; Halualani, Rona; Morella-Pozzi, Dana; Morrison, Jennifer and Sunseri, Mary Anne. Panel discussion at the National Communication Associate Annual Convention in Washington, DC in November 2012. Discussion included the history of the AANAPISI grant, emergent writing practices at SJSU, SJSU students’ writing experiences and how they helped shared the curriculum to strengthen their writing.
  - Invited Presentation: Scharberg, Maureen. Mission College, Santa Clara, CA. Spoke to instructional and counseling faculty on preparing community college students to successfully transfer into STEM majors at SJSU and at other four year institutions. Also, spoke on ways the AANAPISI programs can help strengthen the transfer pipeline from community colleges to Cal State Universities.
  - AANAPISI Team Members attended the following conferences during this review period (not included above):
    - ASIASF Higher Education Summit
    - AANAPISI Western Regional Meeting
    - APAHE 2013 Conference
    - White House Initiative on Asian American & Pacific Islanders
    - 2013 US Department of Education Higher Education Program
    - CSU AAPI Initiative—Journey to Success Meeting

## Section B

The following information documents the institution's experience with the grant as reported during the current reporting period.

6. If your institution has experienced any unexpected outcomes as a result of this grant, that affect for better or worse its capacity to fulfill the goals of the legislation, tell us about them here.
  - Below are unexpected outcomes (for the better) that we wanted to share, but could not report on them in the summary section due to the 1000 word limit.
    - Here is a list of the lesson plans that were developed by faculty. All are available on our AANAPISI website (<http://www.sjsu.edu/aanapisi>):
      - “Five Ways to Make Writing Clear and Concise” by Deb Caterina.
      - “Incorporating Quotations” by Sara Cook.
      - “Identifying Rhetorical Strategies in Argument” by Katie Masters.
      - “Using Peer Feedback and Work-Flow Tips to Strengthen Argumentation” by David Mesher.
      - “Anatomy of a Blog Post” by Daniel Murphy.
      - “Teaching Credential Students How to Teach Articles” by Katya Karathanos.
      - “Writing an Abstract” by Martin Leach.
      - “Procrastination-Proof Researching and Writing” by Rebekah Sidman-Taveau.
      - “Using Signal Words and Phrases” by Patricia Albers.
      - “Learning about Introductions for Academic Essays” by Sarah Prasad.
      - “Writing a Review Article” by Xiaoyan Xu.
      - “Achieving Concision” by Judith Georges.
      - “Developing Instructional Writing with the ‘How-To’ Zine” by Monica Peck.
      - “How to Begin Writing a Research Paper” by Michele McCarthy.
      - “Writing Communities: Assessing Effective Written Communication” by Shannon Rose Riley.
      - “How to Write Agendas and Meeting Minutes” by Tabitha Hart.
    - The Writing Center received excellent feedback from our faculty regarding their Writing Specialists supported by the AANAPISI grant. Here is a sample of such feedback:

*Dear John,*

*I want to take this opportunity before the bustle of the spring semester overwhelms me to thank you for the support and encouragement you provided my English 1B students last semester (fall 2012).*

*The detailed email summaries encapsulating your tutoring sessions with my students provides me invaluable visibility into their writing strengths and weakness - thus allowing me to pinpoint priority focus areas during class. This is by far one of my most favorite features of the Writing Center.*

*The suggestions and re-direct you offer students enable them to not only produce a much cleaner final draft (which is a huge help when grading stacks upon stacks of essays each weekend), but also it helps students develop healthy habits of critical thinking, editing, revising and rewriting.*

*Often students are either too timid or “busy” to seek help. To force this issue this semester, I am making the initial visit to the Writing Center mandatory for my students. They MUST make an appointment or suffer point deductions. After the first visit, all subsequent visits are extra credit. Anticipate seeing more of my students.*

*Thank you again for helping my students produce better drafts for me to grade. I look forward to continued partnership with you and your colleagues again this semester.*

*Kind regards, Laimin Lo*

- Author Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni visited SJSU on April 22, 2013. She hosted two events that day. The first, at noon, was a discussion about writing, with Ms. Divakaruni talking about the struggles she had with writing and her decision to start writing. During the second event later this evening, Ms. Divakaruni read from her latest novel, *Oleander Girl*, and answered questions from the audience. Both events were successful, with over 300 students, faculty, staff, and community members in attendance. Here are some examples of student feedback from our Children’s Literature course (English 112A):
  - “She [Chitra] radiated with light and inviting energy. [?] Chitra was so humble and honest about her experience as a writer. She inspired me to write. I had always seen the benefit of writing and appreciated the creative process of it, but after hearing her talk, I felt capable of writing my own stories.”
  - “I gained a better knowledge on how to find inspiration for writing.”
  - “After listening to Chitra talk, I know that I can always practice more and become a better writer. [?] It was also nice to hear that she never thought writing would be a career for her when she was young and that

she started writing at an older age. It gave people hope and helped them understand that it was okay to change careers and change a different dream.”

- “After facing racism, she wanted to make sure to share her culture with children so that they learn to become accepting of others. This was remarkable to me because I believe in the power of writing and in the power of words. It is clear that books can help advocate for acceptance and equality. Her presentation was intimate. It was a great experience attending her talk. She motivated me.”
7. Tell us about any challenges that you have had during the reporting period or that you anticipate in the coming year which may affect your ability to meet the goals of your grant. Include, if applicable, your institution's plans to meet these challenges.
- In Summer 2013, the College of Applied Sciences and Arts (CASA) had a change in their AANAPISI team leader due to lack of progress on their grant goals and failure to recruit faculty. A new AANAPISI Team Member for CASA joined the team in September 2013 and she is now focusing on recruiting faculty to participate in our faculty workshops as well as developing freshmen writing intensive workshops for this college. We are still optimistic that we will meet the goals for this college, but it will be delayed.
  - Although two faculty enthusiastically reported their progress in infusing writing assignments and support in our Asian American lower division General Education courses at our May 2013 AANAPISI Writing Excellence Advisory Meeting, we have not had any updates since then. Numerous attempts to contact the faculty members were made by a variety of team members, but to no avail. We will continue to try to reach out to these faculty members, but it is unclear if we will be able to reach them.
8. Has the grant facilitated or contributed to bringing additional resources to your institution, for example, new Federal, State, or local dollars that can be attributed partly to your grant activities?
- Yes, San Jose State University received \$72,697 in additional funds from the U.S. Department of Education for Calendar Year October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2014. Funding will be used to develop surveys and focus group questions that will help SJSU better understand our AAPI communities. We will also analyze this data in order to update our student success strategies both inside and outside the classroom. There are also two cohorts that we wish to further study in this project: first-time frosh and transfers who leave SJSU after attending for one year and AAPI graduating students.