

SATAL Can Support Your Quest for Getting More Information about Student Learning

By Adriana Signorini

Students Assessing Teaching and Learning (SATAL) is a program designed to provide feedback to instructors and academic programs interested in enhancing student learning. How does the program work? The SATAL program employs undergraduates who are trained to lead focus group discussions, videotape and itemize patterns of classroom instruction, conduct exit interviews with graduating seniors, and conduct entry surveys to establish students' preparation for a course. Other assessment options are also available. Because students regard the SATAL program members as peers, they tend to be more open about their difficulties in their courses, and the SATAL members are better at understanding students' common misconceptions when addressing an issue than their instructors would be, leading to more accurate feedback to the instructor and program.

"Having SATAL coordinate and conduct the interview was crucial to the success of the assessment. Students needed an environment in which they could speak freely without professors there." – Applied Math

Since spring 2009, SATAL has assisted seven academic programs in their academic review process and twenty two instructional faculty by gathering feedback on courses and classroom activities. The SATAL program has assisted faculty in answering key pedagogical questions: "How do repeat students differ from new students in how they learn? Does providing feedback on homework help students learn better? Will the use of clickers engage my students? Are my lectures and slides clear enough? What can I do to engage my class more?"

SATAL services can support your quest for getting more information about student learning without overworking yourselves.



Invite SATAL members to collect confidential feedback on your courses by either completing the request form on the center's website: <http://crte.ucmerced.edu/node/86> or contacting Adriana Signorini in person in COB 214, by email asignorini@ucmerced.edu, or by phone 228 4766. The distribution of the SATAL reports will be at the discretion of the instructor requesting it.

Guidebook Project

By Anne Zanzucchi

During October 2009, the Center was awarded a two-year \$295,484 grant from the U.S. Department of Education Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education. Center graduate fellows, who have a 25% GSR appointment in the Center, conduct classroom research and publish their findings in our guidebook project paper series. As our campus serves a majority cohort of first-generation students, this guidebook focuses on the instructional practices relevant to creating an academic community for at-risk student populations. The program was initiated in spring 2010, with two peer and faculty-reviewed articles and related curriculum published on [eScholarship](#). Summer guidebook participants are working with faculty in UC Merced's [Summer Bridge](#) Program, a Title V-funded writing and math intensive course addressing the needs of at-risk local incoming freshman. Summer participants will write curriculum and articles related to (1) evaluating reading skills, (2) meeting the needs of international students, and (3) integrating multi-media laboratory opportunities in introductory social sciences courses. Spring 2010 participants, Debye Conte and Korana Burke, will be offering a Teaching Matters workshop on October 26 from

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