Grand Rapids Community College Foundation
Instructional Improvement and Professional Development (IIPD) Grant
Report Form

IIPD guidelines require that any individual who receives an IIPD grant must submit a report on their activities within 60 days of completion of the activities. This report must be received by the GRCC Grants and Resource Development Officer in order to be considered eligible for an IIPD grant in a subsequent year. Submit your report to the Grants and Resource Development Officer, mezzanine level, College Park Plaza Building.

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Date of IIPD Award (insert year award was received):
October, 200_ March, 2008

Purpose of Grant:
To attend AWP Conference in Chicago

Please respond to the following questions related to the activity for which you received grant funding and attach your report to this form.

1. Describe the new avenues of instruction, including changes in curriculum, teaching strategies or other changes that are resulting from your grant-funded activity.

2. How will the grant-funded activity result in an impact on student learning and enhancements to student success?

3. What steps are you taking to assess the impact of this activity on student learning?

4. How are you engaging others in the learning process and disseminating activity results with the wider campus community? NOTE: If shared learning activities have not yet taken place, an addendum to this report must be filed with the Grants Office describing shared learning activities prior to applying for another IIPD grant, as required by IIPD Guidelines.

5. Describe how the grant-funded activity is supporting the objectives of your department and your existing job responsibilities.

6. How has this grant helped in fostering your professional development goals?

Revised 2/07
1. My attendance at the Association of Writers and Writing Programs Conference in Chicago, IL will have the most impact on my EN 278 class, Introduction to Women’s Literature. The sessions I attended will change the reading list for that course, in part to include more lesbian literature, which is culturally more likely to be dismissed as non-literary, or invisible in the academy.

I also attended a session entitled “Writing Class/Writing Gender,” which centered on contemporary women writers who identify as working class. They discussed the challenges of writing from a working class perspective to an audience that is mostly middle and upper class. I expect to read a text often referred to in that session, O Street, for consideration in my EN 278 class. I’m hopeful that I’ll be able to involve texts that speak to class diversity among women writers in future semesters of EN 278.

2. The sessions I attended at the AWP conference will eventually expose future students to a more diverse body of literature. Several of the sessions I attended are most applicable to Women’s Literature students; however, my composition students (in EN 101 and EN 102) will also benefit. One of the most powerful sessions for me was an evening reading by Dorothy Allison. I teach her essay “What Did you Expect?” in my EN 101 classes, and the experience of hearing her read will be a great tool I can share with my students as we study her text each semester. At her reading in Chicago, I was enthralled. She was so animated when she read her short story; to be able to share that with students is a way to engage them in the text.

Additionally, I rode the elevator with her! Albeit our shared ride was Anecdotes like these make students understand that the writers they read in their textbooks are actual people who exist, have fears and dreams and have to ride elevators too. My experiences will allow me to connect with my students better, and that will inevitably impact their success in the class.

3. Currently, I’m still gathering information to assess the impact of my attendance at AWP on student learning; especially I’m gathering reading material for new texts in the Women’s Literature class. I think the changes I’ll make in subsequent semesters in this class will be beneficial to students in terms of exposing them to different kinds of diversities among women writers.

I did attend two sessions on poetry – one a reading, and one a more academic session on. My EN 101 students are working on a new assignment this semester that asks them to analyze a poem, to mimic the poem, and finally to engage with some of the critical conversations that scholars are having about the poem, through interaction with the GRCC databases. Since I attended AWP, I’ve tried to locate audio files online, so that my students can experience the way a poet reads her/his own work. I’ve also tried to locate multiple poems about a single topic, so that students can see how a poet’s choices
can range in possibilities. When students turn this assignment in, I expect to see some success with the ways they are able to engage with the assignment, and especially, their excitement about the paper.

4. My colleagues who attended the AWP conference and I are planning to hold a panel discussion for our department at a future learning day. We feel that this conference was very specific to the English department, and would be difficult to translate into cross-college learning. However, we know our department will greatly appreciate and benefit from the various learning we gained through the sessions we each attended individually.

5. As previously mentioned, part of my teaching responsibility is EN 278, Women’s Literature. The class is relatively new, and I spend a lot of time researching and developing material for the class, educating myself about writers, issues in the field, and critical perspectives. My attendance at AWP was a terrific way to remain current in the field of Women’s Literature.

Additionally, as a writing teacher, part of my job is to consider how colleagues across the country are talking about writing, and what they’re saying about writing and writing instruction. My attendance at AWP put me in conversations about writing that help to develop my repertoire of techniques, authors, texts, and contacts.

6. As a writer myself, the opportunity to attend AWP was fabulous. I was able to attend sessions that developed my own interests as a poet; I was able to meet other teachers and other writers over lunch and in between sessions. Also, I was able to foster collegiality with my department members who attended the conference with me. My professional development goals include seeing myself as a writer more thoroughly, in order to be a better teacher of writing. This conference certainly encouraged that.