

Received by BaSk:  
Outcome:

## Basic Skills Project Proposal Application

Before completing this form, please review the Proposal Guidelines and Evaluation Rubric below. Additional pages may be submitted to supplement this application.

Date: [November 14, 2011](#)

Applicant: [Nadiyah Taylor](#)

Project Title: [Blackboard Support for Early Childhood Students](#)

Discipline(s): [Early Childhood Development](#)

Phone Number(s): [925-424-1175](#)

Endorsements (Signature): \_\_\_\_\_

Dean Signature

Amount of Basic Skills Funds Requested (max \$3000) \$: [2859.88](#)

(Attach a detailed budget for funds requested. If the funds requested are part of a larger project budget, indicate how the funds requested fit into the entire budget.)

Please review the **Basic Skills Project Proposal Guidelines**, which describes the process and funding cycles, including timelines; and consider the **Basic Skills Project Proposal Rubric**, which the committee will use to evaluate your proposal, when preparing your application.

I. Goals: Which Basic Skills Committee Goal(s) does your proposal align with?

	Goal 1	100% Orientation, 100% Assessment, 100% Placement
	Goal 2	Expansion of Learning Communities (LCs)
	Goal 3	Professional Learning / Faculty Resources
	Goal 4	Counseling / Academic Advising Support
✓	Goal 5	Supplemental Instruction / Academic Support Services

II. Outcomes: What is the primary desired effect of your project?

[Overall, our primary outcome is to reduce barriers to student success by providing supplemental instruction on the use of Blackboard. Specifically our planned outcomes are:](#)

- [75% of project participants report that as a result of the support they now feel more comfortable using Blackboard \(based on pre-post student surveys\).](#)
- [75% of participants are able to successfully upload assignments, access their grades, and complete an online-only extra credit assignment \(based on pre-post student survey and faculty survey at project end\).](#)
- [Faculty report a 30% decrease in the amount of in-class, between class and office hour time spent on technology support for students \(based on pre-post faculty survey\).](#)

III. Description of proposed activity including how BSI funds will be used?

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**Background:** As more ECD faculty use Blackboard to hold class information, create assignments and tests, and to share information with students it has become clear that many ECD students need intensive support to be successful in this new environment. In Fall 2011, I have 212 students. Over the course of this semester roughly 15% of the students have not been able to correctly upload their assignments. In one class, with a high number of returning students, this number is closer to 30%. My students have reported high levels of frustration with having to use Blackboard because it is challenging for them and two students considered dropping, specifically because of this frustration. Some students have no computer access at home and due to work and family conflicts, find it hard to use the campus computer lab. Other students don't know how to use the computer very well and are dependent on their children to help them. I spend at least 5-10 minutes between each of my classes and sometimes an additional 5 minutes at the start of class, walking students through the basics of the Blackboard system. Over the course of a 16-week semester, this is an incredible amount of time on computer support. 4 of the 5 ECD faculty members who use Blackboard have reported similar trends (the last is a part-time faculty member whom we haven't spoken with about this issue).

**Project proposal:** Our project will offer one-on-one Blackboard support to early childhood development (ECD) students during the Spring 2012 semester. This will serve as a pilot project to determine if such support reduces barriers for students (inability to be academically successful because of the increased use of Blackboard) and increases student comfort and facility with Blackboard and basic computer skills such as attaching and uploading documents.

### **Components:**

In this project, we will use BSI funds for the following:

- 1) Provide 3 weekly, 1-hour drop-in times for students to meet with an ECD faculty member for 1:1 support with Blackboard. (Faculty F hour fund request)
  - a. These sessions will be held in the conference room of the child development center for the familiarity and convenience to the student. It is important to use the relationship between the ECD faculty and students to help them feel comfortable using these services.
  - b. There will be one daytime and two evening sessions per week. The sessions will begin the second week of classes and continue for 8 weeks. Students can also make special appointments if needed.
  - c. In these sessions we will show them the online learning resources created by the TLC as well as answer specific questions from the students.
- 2) Have available 4 laptops for students to use during these sessions, in case they don't have their own, so they can practice the skills as they learn them. (Laptop request)
  - a. The ECD department has two available for this project and needs at two additional computers to have a larger number of students be able to participate at one time.
- 3) ECD faculty will give an incentive to student participation, in the form of a USB flashdrive, for attending 3 sessions. (Flashdrive request)
  - a. We chose this incentive because many students report not knowing either how to save their documents or how to attach and upload them. The flashdrive provides the tool for these actions and allows the ECD faculty to show the students how to use the tool.
- 4) ECD faculty will prepare an extra credit assignment, which is only available online as part of the assessment of the project.

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- 5) We will do outreach in all ECD classes for this project using printed flyers, emails and announcements in classes. (Printing and materials request)

IV. Where in your Program Review is the need for this project specifically described?

Our program review points to the need for reduction of student barriers and providing students with tools for success in several places. I will include the most relevant sections, page numbers and the direct wording below:

*In the Program Mission section, page 4.*

The ECD Program will

- enhance the student's learning by teaching the information, tools and techniques in the most meaningful teaching format;
- identify and work to alleviate barriers to student's success;
- offer coursework that will enable both daytime and evening students to obtain their educational goals in a timely manner;
- obtain resources and training from the Library and Teaching and Learning Center to deepen and expand learning and teaching.

*In the section "Challenges," p. 7*

The ECD program has identified several groups of students all with different goals, levels and types of preparation, and different access needs.

*In the section "Opportunities," p. 8*

To identify students' affinity for online courses a survey went out to over 183 students at varying levels of ECD coursework. The data conveyed that those who had taken more than the first two introductory courses were more apt to desire an online course. However, the vast majority preferred face-to-face classes to hybrid. One hundred and forty two preferred a face-to-face class to a hybrid and fifty-six preferred an online class. ***It is also noteworthy that 137 said they would take an online course if they received training and support.***

***In consideration of the student's feedback we will selectively and intermittently offer online and hybrid coursework at the higher level courses, with access to training and support.*** (Same section, p. 9)

Program Name: see above

Page Number: see above

IV. Timeline: Describe the timeline of your project, including when the various aspects of your project (such as planning, implementation and evaluation) will occur.

Project duration: Jan. 23 - May 4

1) Planning: 1<sup>st</sup> two weeks of December 11 and January 12

2) Implementation: Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup> through March 23:

Weekly meetings with students, baseline evaluation of students and faculty

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3) Evaluation:

- Baseline evaluation of faculty - Last two weeks of January
- Baseline evaluation of students - First time student uses the services
- Final evaluation of students and faculty - First week of May

4) Final report by May 11, 2012

V. Data: What data will demonstrate achievement of your intended outcomes? What data are you already collecting? What data will you need from IR?

Student use of the services:

We will have sign in and out sheets for each session to keep track of usage

Data from IR:

Understanding more about our student population will help us in the project. Specifically we will request:

- Data on how many ECD students are returning to college after more than 10 years
- Data on how many ECD students are first time college students
- Up to date gender, race, economic demographic data
- Data on access to personal computer
- Data on comfort level of using computer for more than social networking

Student data:

Survey #1 - Paper

- 1) Survey all ECD students at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of class on how their comfort level with Blackboard overall and if they know how to do specific tasks (upload papers, access “my grades,” read the announcements and find assignments).
- 2) Re-do this same survey the first time a student accesses project support

Survey #2

- 3) Do a final survey, in Blackboard, with the same questions as survey #1. Additionally, ask what specific components of the project were most useful to them
- 4) Include questions about comfort level of using computer for more than social networking

Faculty data:

Survey #1:

- 5) In December 2011: How much time is spent supporting students on technology vs. content; specific challenges experienced in fall 2011; how much do they see online work as a potential barrier for students.

Survey #2

- 6) Same questions as survey #1. Also include, how often they referred students to the resource; are they more or less likely to support another project like this and are they more or less likely to do more online assignments or activities in the future based on their experience with this project.