



Building the Future Through Quality Education

News Release

Santa Ana College and Partners Receive \$1.3M Grant for STEM Education

May 2, 2019

(Santa Ana, CA) - Santa Ana College (SAC) and its educational partners have been named the recipient of a \$1.3 million grant from the California Education Learning Lab (Learning Lab) to improve outcomes for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) learners in targeted chemistry, math and engineering courses by deploying and improving open, adaptive courseware.

The “Community Sourced, Data-Driven Improvements to Open, Adaptive Courseware” project includes a partnership with California State University, Fullerton and University of California, Berkeley and builds on Carnegie Mellon University’s Open Learning Initiative (OLI) and Lumen Learning courseware that has been demonstrably effective in closing gaps and improving performance for underrepresented learners in STEM.

“We are honored to receive this grant along with our prestigious four-year university partners at UC Berkeley and CSU Fullerton,” said Linda Rose, Ed.D., president, Santa Ana College. “It is a true testament to the quality of education we provide to our students. We will use the funding to thoroughly investigate current courseware and use those findings to integrate new tools into existing educational contexts. Through this project, we hope to increase equity and bridge achievement gaps in undergraduate STEM education.”

SAC’s project will look at the effectiveness of open, adaptive courseware by investigating the impact of multi-sourced, data-driven improvement outcomes for STEM learners and investigate the impact of the courseware approach to STEM learning on faculty attitudes and culture. As part of the project, analytical tools will be developed to provide faculty, student and crowdsourced feedback and participation to ensure student voices play a central role in identifying areas of difficulty, evaluating materials and improvements and recognizing student experience. Additionally, the project will expand on established protocols from Carnegie Mellon University, including embedding a cultural anthropologist to use a mixed-methods approach to better understand barriers and facilitators for effective adoption of technology enhanced learning (TEL) innovations.

“Community Sourced, Data-Driven Improvements to Open, Adaptive Courseware” is expected to produce improved open, adaptive STEM courseware to target underrepresented learners; provide open tools to support the iterative, data-driven improvement of open courseware; enable a clearer understanding of how improvement approaches support or hinder learning; and offer insights into barriers and facilitators for sustained adoption and effective use of TEL innovations.

This was the first request for proposal from the Learning Lab and was focused exclusively on “improving equity, accessibility and outcomes for STEM gateway courses.”

The Learning Lab was established by Assembly Bill 1809 in 2018 to be a competitive grantmaking program to increase learning outcomes and close equity and achievement gaps in STEM and other disciplines. The Learning Lab maintains an annual budget of \$10 million with initial grants focusing on lower-division online and hybrid courses in STEM. In later years, funds may be used to support professional development and a curated library of course material that has successfully accomplished the Learning Lab’s goals.

Visit www.opr.ca.gov/learninglab for more information.

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About Santa Ana College

[Santa Ana College](#) (SAC), which turned 100 years old in 2015, serves about 18,000 students each semester at its main campus in Santa Ana. The college prepares students for transfer to four-year institutions, provides invaluable workforce training, and customized training for business and industry. In addition, another 11,000 students are served through the college’s School of Continuing Education located at Centennial Education Center. Ranked as one of the nation’s top two-year colleges awarding associate degrees to Latino and Asian students, the college is also recognized throughout the state for its comprehensive workforce training programs for nurses, firefighters, law enforcement and other medical personnel. SAC is one of two comprehensive colleges under the auspices of the [Rancho Santiago Community College District](#).

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