

**Case Study of Cluster VESL Classes Model
San Diego Community College District Continuing Education**

Background Information

Type of program:	Continuing education division of a community college
Number of students enrolled in program:	Enrollment at the Mid-City campus is approximately 110 students per 18-week semester. The course is offered in the morning and evening, with an average of 30 active students in each class during a semester.
Demographics of enrolled students:	Students are adult English language learners from diverse countries of origin. New students are placed in the VESL class after an initial assessment of language skills and goals. If students have a CASAS score of 215 or above and they also state that they are coming to school in order to get a job or get a better job, they are placed in the VESL class. Students also transfer from other high-intermediate to advanced level ESL classes to meet their employment training goals.
IET students' most common goals:	Improve English skills to get a job, get a better job, get job training, or get a GED.

Model Implementation

Year model was implemented:	1992
Triggers for implementation:	The VESL program was developed to help immigrant adults become self-sufficient in the United States. While most ESL classes focus on general English language development and life skills, the cluster VESL class aims to extend those courses with job-specific lessons to prepare students for entry-level employment in clerical, automotive, hospitality, healthcare, retail, and food service fields. The cluster VESL class also trains students in soft skills so that they are prepared to succeed within the U.S. workplace culture. Also, in many of these fields, continuing education offers vocational training. There was a gap in the pathway between traditional ESL classes and the vocational training classes that the cluster VESL class endeavors to fill.
Who was involved in the implementation:	Deans of ESL and vocational education, department chairs, and ESL/ABE and vocational faculty wrote curriculum.

Case Study of Cluster VESL Classes Model
San Diego Community College District Continuing Education

Greatest challenges for implementation:	1. Instructors require additional training and support in order to do the following: • Integrate workplace skills into an ESL class • Understand employer needs • Understand current trends in résumé writing and job interview strategies • Be familiar with several job-specific curricula • Know the requirements of accessible job-training programs • Be familiar with the TABE and other non-ESL tests that VESL students may need to take • Develop effective relationships with counselors and instructors who work with the programs that students want to enter 2. Ideally, the program population must be large enough to offer VESL as an alternative ESL class in addition to general ESL at the high-intermediate and advanced levels. VESL doesn't meet the needs of students who are not seeking employment, are retired, or are college bound. 3. Cluster VESL classes require a large amount of materials to be developed, updated, and stored in one place. The curriculum must be updated in order to respond to changes in technology and marketplace trends. In our program, the VESL classroom holds materials for CNA, Office Skills, Automotive, Food Service, Child Care, Retail, Hotel Housekeeping, and Construction. 4. Administrators need to identify how VESL fits into career pathways and complements or supplements other programs. Often students' career aspirations require long periods of time to develop sufficient English skills. VESL instructors must help students make realistic, short-term goals. Counseling support may or may not be available for ESL students. Instructors must be prepared to help students evaluate their options. For example, does the student need a GED, career training, or college in order to meet his or her employment goals? What level of English skills needs to be attained to take the next step?
--	---

Case Study of Cluster VESL Classes Model San Diego Community College District Continuing Education

Greatest resources for implementation:	Experienced VESL instructors are very important mentors and should be part of developing, maintaining, or growing a cluster VESL program. VESL curricula are available through OTAN and also from OVAE. In addition, textbooks such as <i>Skills for Success</i> or <i>Working It Out</i> are good core texts to use for whole group instruction before breaking out into individualized study time. CALPRO maintains a Virtual Workroom on Workplace Readiness that provides resources for ESL instructors to implement in a general ESL class or VESL classes. There are also links to relevant research.
---	--

Current State of the Model

Model's objective:	Our cluster VESL program aims to serve high-intermediate and advanced level ESL students who have diverse employment goals. Students accomplish the following: • Improve English listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills through lessons with a life-skill theme and workplace application • Gain job-specific vocabulary • Understand the duties and responsibilities of certain jobs • Identify marketplace trends • Learn about U.S. workplace culture • Practice soft skills • Gain basic computer skills • Identify the steps in a chosen career pathway • Write a résumé and cover letter • Fill out a job application • Prepare for a job interview Students who complete the requirements of a specific program receive a VESL certificate. They are assisted in the transition to the next step of their chosen career pathway.
---------------------------	--

--	--

**Case Study of Cluster VESL Classes Model
San Diego Community College District Continuing Education**

Classes included in IET model:	We offer morning and evening cluster VESL classes at the Mid-City campus.
Who teaches each class:	The morning class is currently taught by two ESL associate professors. One instructor teaches on Monday and Tuesday and another teaches Wednesday through Friday. The evening class is also taught by two ESL associate professors. One instructor teaches on Monday and the other on Tuesday through Thursday. However, team teaching is not a required element of the program. An instructional aide also supports students in both classes.
How and when instructional planning is done:	Instructional planning is typically done prior to the beginning of the course for a limited number of hours and then during the course, especially for instructors who are team teaching. One to three hours weekly are spent communicating and planning with the team teacher. In continuing education, there is an institution-wide VESL committee that meets monthly or bimonthly for two hours at a time. Throughout the semester, some time is spent communicating with the job training and basic skills programs that our students transition to. The VESL coordinator and counselors alert instructors to pertinent events, updates, etc.
How model is funded:	The model is funded with WIA, 231 funds.
Greatest challenges in continuing the model:	The program requires funding support to maintain updated curricula and to respond to changes in technology and marketplace trends. Staffing is less flexible than in other ESL classes because instructors and classroom aides need additional training to become familiar with all of the different curriculum areas and the variety of software programs that are utilized.

**Case Study of Cluster VESL Classes Model
San Diego Community College District Continuing Education**

Greatest resources in continuing the model:	Support from faculty mentors, administrators, and counselors is essential for the continuation of this model. Faculty mentors advise instructors on curriculum and instructional matters. Administrators make professional development and necessary funding available. Funding is required to facilitate ongoing revisions to curricula to keep pace with marketplace trends. Administrators can also encourage communication and collaboration between departments. Continuation of the model also requires access to professional development for instructors in the areas of technology for lesson delivery as well as making technology accessible to students. Counselors inform instructors of program requirements and facilitate transitions as students progress in a career pathway.
Greatest success:	The cluster VESL class makes it possible for students with diverse career interests to pursue their individual goals. The class structure includes an independent study lab hour in which students are encouraged to lead and train others. Students also develop and demonstrate soft skills, such as being resourceful, helpful, organized, and a self-starter. By the end of the course, significant increases in self-confidence are observed, partly as a result of being encouraged to “take charge” of their own learning during the lab time. Students exit the VESL class with more advanced English skills and greater knowledge of the U.S. workplace. Students are prepared to obtain employment by beginning the job search process, by entering a job training program, or by entering a GED preparation course.

Case Study of Cluster VESL Classes Model
San Diego Community College District Continuing Education (continued)

Data used to assess program:	Student completions within the course/program; pretests and post-tests (CASAS for pretest and post-test in VESL, TABE to help determine readiness for transition); students entering into employment post-graduation (also noting when a student leaves the class prematurely for an employment opportunity); students transitioning to other more advanced classes, college programs, or other educational opportunities; students who persist within the course/program. Within the cluster VESL program, each student also has a checklist of “exit requirements” on which he or she documents work completed and scores when applicable. We also track weekly quiz scores and attendance percentages so that student accomplishments can be recognized frequently within a semester. Program completion usually requires at least two semesters, so it is important to document and recognize short-term successes as well.
-------------------------------------	---

Case Study of Cluster VESL Classes Model
San Diego Community College District Continuing Education (continued)

ESL Student Pathway to ECC Impacted Vocational Programs: (circle choice)

Auto Technology • Autobody • Auto Upholstery
 Welding AM/PM • Electronic Prepress • Commercial Printing

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Instructor: _____ Campus: _____
 *Student: _____ *Date of Birth: ____/____/____ *Phone: _____

 *E-mail: _____ *required for processing application

Academic Category	Instructor Initials	Remarks
1. CASAS Score: _____ (236—entry score for Auto Tech)	_____	_____
2. Completion of Diascriptive Reading Level 4 with 80% accuracy	_____	_____
3. Completion of Auto Tech VESL modules, “Reading in the Workplace”	_____	_____
4. Hours of attendance in VESL class—*90% is ECC Voc class standard	_____	_____
5. Demonstrates effective soft skills such as punctuality, working in teams, helping others, using technology, etc. (instructor highlights best attributes)	_____	_____
6. Demonstrates good speaking and listening skills (instructor highlights best attributes)	_____	_____

Instructor Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

7. TABE score _____ (required of all applicants)	Referring Counselor Initials _____	8. Does the student have a California driver's license? NO YES/ Date of expiration: _____
--	--	--

FOR ECC OFFICE USE:

Final status of student:

Date enrolled in Auto Tech class _____ Completed Auto Tech _____

Dropped _____

By: _____ Date: _____

SDCCD 2011 R. Hernandez, S. Bartlett, C. Layton, S. Gwynne

Case Study of Cluster VESL Classes Model
San Diego Community College District Continuing Education (continued)

Student Referral to the CNA Vocational Training Class From VESL

Teacher's Name _____ Site _____

Student's Name _____ Date _____

This student has shown academic excellence in the following ways:

Academic Category

Teacher's Initials

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. CASAS Score _____
(236 entry score to ABE) | _____ |
| 2. 75% completion of Diascriptive Reading Level 4 with 80%
accuracy | _____ |
| 3. Weekly test scores (80% average accuracy) | _____ |
| 4. 75% completion of CNA VESL modules | _____ |
| 5. Hours of attendance in the class | _____ |
| 6. Mock job interview | _____ |
| 7. Demonstrates soft skills, such as punctuality, working in
teams, helping others, using technology, etc. | _____ |
| 8. TABE score _____ Date taken _____ | _____ |

Student's preference for CNA class:

* morning afternoon evening
 (starts 4:45 p.m. and includes Saturday Clinicals)

Comments: _____

*Class schedules are subject to change

Teacher's Signature: _____ Date _____

OFFICE USE COUNSELORS:

Final status of recommended student returned to referring instructor:

Date _____ By _____
 Date enrolled in CNA class _____ Passed CNA class _____ Dropped _____