



**The TEACHER CENTER of Broome County**  
**Teacher Study Group Grant Award**  
**2001-2002**

**FINAL REPORT**  
**DOCUMENT PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES**

**STUDY GROUP TOPIC: Hands-on, Technology Based AP Biology**

**The final report must be word-processed and submitted both in print and on disk using this form. Include information under each of the following headings.**

**Describe the initial goal of the group noting any adjustments that had to be made as time passed.**

The initial goal of the group was to look at the existing advanced placement biology course and to find a way to change it from a lecture based 45-minute instruction period to a more hands-on, technology driven 90-minute instruction period.

Some adjustments had to be made. We ran out of time. Searching for new materials and trying to figure out where the new materials could be placed in the curriculum was more time consuming than anticipated. The teachers that we tried to contact were less than responsive. The Internet and past-shared materials became the primary resource for existing curricula modifications. It was difficult to effectively plan because the district has not determined next year's scheduling for AP biology.

**Describe the ACTION PLAN that the group followed.**

Our action plan was to analyze the existing program, to plan a time line, to research user friendly activities and labs, to revamp existing plans and activities, to compare several curriculum guides found through the internet to those shared by other local teachers, and then to restructure the existing program.

**Describe how the action plan was implemented.**

Implementation of the action plan was done in various steps and degrees. We spent time on the Internet searching for AP Biology curricula to investigate web sites, links, interactive activities, and new labs. We analyzed several curricula already established and posted on the Internet. We also utilized curricula and labs shared by local teachers and came up with our own workable timetable. Within this timetable, we integrated labs and supplemental activities. Our goal was to find a lab and an activity for each major concept.

### **Evaluation of the impact of the study group effort on teacher/student performance.**

- What evidence is there that teaching practices have changed?
- What evidence is there that student achievement is improving?
- What evidence is there that the goals of the study group has/has not been met?

Teaching practices have already changed to due to the fact that we have been made aware of the pre-existing resources available to be used by students and by teachers. We have started to use the computers and Internet resources since we have started the research into implementing a more varied approach.

It is hard to determine improvement of student achievement since the course is nearly over and the bulk of the material has already been presented. The true evidence will be next year when the students take the AP Bio exam after the new semester schedule has been implemented, and we have integrated the more hands on approach. The students have responded favorably to the different approach we have recently introduced.

Evidence of goals having been met is that we have a guideline to use for next year to revise and to adapt. We are approaching the semester, hands on program with enthusiasm and confidence.

Evidence of goals not being met is that we are not finished. We have been unable to fully utilize the new approach this year. Next year should be the true testing ground. Our goal of finding a lab and/or activity for each major concept has also not been met. We ran out of time before we accomplished all that we intended.

Comment on the value of the study group process? Did it work for you?

The study group process was a very valuable process. We were committed to accomplishing the established task in a timely matter. The interaction, the sharing of ideas, and the cooperative planning was very rewarding and instrumental in the positive development of the curriculum. It worked for us.

Kim Roundy  
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