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CTTL Try It! Mini-Grant
Final Report
January 13, 2014

For my CTTL Try It! Mini-Grant, I procured 4 mobile group seating tables and used them to replace one column of seating in my AHP classroom for my Fall 2013 OCS 332 course. Traditionally arranged with 3 columns and 5 rows of tables, the classroom utilized 2 outer columns of standard tables and one middle column of randomly-arranged group tables. For each class session, I entered the classroom early, moved the standard tables out of the center column, walked down the hall to retrieve the group tables from our storage closet, and set up the group tables with chairs in the middle of the classroom. I allowed students to freely choose their seating (with a reminder to sit at the group tables if they had not yet tried them) and classroom activities otherwise proceeded as normal.

At four points in the semester—weeks 1, 4, 8, and 12—students completed a 3-question anonymous survey. Questions 1 and 2 on the survey asked students to rate their ease of achieving learning objectives (Q1) and working with other students (Q2) on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high). Question 3 (Q3)

than those of students at the traditional tables for 3 of the 4 survey weeks. Thus, hypothesis 1 (that students at the group tables would give higher ratings on Q1 and Q2 than their peers at traditional tables) was not supported. Students who sat at the group tables did reference the seating arrangement in Q3 more than the students seated at the traditional tables; however, those references were not as frequent as I had anticipated, so hypothesis 2 was also not supported.

On balance, the results of the focus group suggested that the students saw the middle tables as good for group work but not for watching the professor or taking notes. The students felt that the tables made it easier to interact with and get to know classmates, easier to form groups for in-class work, and made them more inclined to participate. However, students also noted that the tables did not seem to clearly facilitate learning objectives or relate to their particular learning styles. Some students voiced discomfort or a feeling of exclusion related to the group tables, and most students said they chose to sit at the group tables when all the seats at the traditional tables had been taken. Some students also comments that they