TO: Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

FROM: Jason S. Todd, Director, Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Faculty Development, Xavier University of Louisiana

DATE: This grant extension must be expended by the end of calendar 2024 (by 12-31-24). A single final report will be due by March 31, 2025

RE: Final Narrative Report
Faculty Communities of Teaching Scholars (FaCTS) No Cost Extension
Reporting period December 4, 2023 – December 31, 2024
Grant Reference #41000719

As you are aware, we recently discovered that we had unexpended funds from a Mellon Foundation grant from eight years ago in the amount of $72,632.04. I am extremely grateful that the Mellon Foundation allowed us to use this money in support of our original grant goals. These funds allowed us to support a 2024 cohort of Mellon Faculty Fellows around the theme of *Human Learning in an AI World.*

Description of the Project and Purpose of the Grant

Since its creation in 1994, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Faculty Development (CAT+FD) has served as a resource to foster effective and innovative teaching for faculty at Xavier University of Louisiana. One of CAT+FD's most innovative initiatives is the *Faculty Communities of Teaching Scholars (FaCTS)* funded by a generous grant from your foundation. FaCTS allows faculty to develop, collaborate on, and implement curricular and pedagogical projects, and to explore themes of relevance to current institutional needs. The overarching goals of this initiative include the following: helping faculty become more scholarly teachers, including the use of pedagogical research to inform their own teaching practices; encouraging faculty involvement in the scholarship of teaching and learning; and ultimately enhancing student learning experiences in participating departments and majors. The 2024 theme was *Human Learning in an AI World.*

In January 2024, CAT+FD selected a cohort of 16 *Mellon FaCTS Fellows*. In May 2024, CAT+FD hosted the FaCTS Summer Seminar—a week-long, intensive seminar that is tailored around the theme. Faculty participants were provided relevant readings in advance, and sessions were led by CAT+FD staff. In addition to the coverage of the theme itself, the FaCTS Summer Seminar included sessions on teaching toward mission, ethics, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. At the end of the seminar, participants submitted their deliverable products. Leading up to the seminar, faculty participants attend monthly workshops related to AI.

Timeline and Significant Accomplishments

<u>FaCTS Activities (January 2024-June 2024)</u>

December 2023. During this time, we sent out the call for proposals to all faculty to apply for the 2024 FaCTS cohort. Applications were due January 19, 2024. (See **Appendix** for RFP.)

January 2024. We received 17 proposals and the review committee selected 16 for funding. Additionally, CAT+FD brought in an external expert and AI and writing, and FaCTS participants were required to attend. See details at https://xula.libcal.com/event/11608896.

February 2024. We had our first cohort meeting where participants shared their project topics and exchanged ideas. We began to collect suggestions for Summer Seminar topics. Additionally, CAT+FD brought in an external expert and AI and teaching, and FaCTS participants were required to attend. See details at https://xula.libcal.com/event/11543046.

March 2024. We began to fully develop the Summer Seminar agenda as well as the corresponding Brightspace course.

April 2024. We completed the Summer Seminar agenda and the corresponding Brightspace course and provided access to all participants. You can view the entire agenda at https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iS2bF9WwQzLfoPLTL_dwdNAbzdnjPNhd/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=112802920494893911308&rtpof=true&sd=true. Additionally, CAT+FD brought in an external expert and AI and ethics, and FaCTS participants were required to attend. See details at https://xula.libcal.com/event/11542961.

May 2024. On May 13-17 we implemented the 2024 FaCTS Summer Seminar in our Mellon Seminar Room. Participants submitted their final products at the end of the seminar. Participants then received their certificates, and we processed their stipends. Additionally, we debriefed after the Seminar, reviewing the suggestions for future sessions and training.

Photo by Elizabeth Yost Hammer

June 2024 We compiled seminar resources on our wiki and disseminated them to all faculty. You can view them at https://catwiki.xula.edu/FaCTS_2024.

July 2024 During the CAT+FD planning retreat for the 2024/2025 academic year, the staff discussed the problem of overwhelming the faculty with new AI tools. It was decided that each semester, CAT+FD would offer one or two sessions focused more on comprehension and implementation. The staff also discussed the need to begin using more regularly some of the Generative AI tools that are available.

Fall 2024 In early October, we asked several of the FaCTS Fellows to discuss the projects they were implementing in their classes as a result of their participation in the May training. The panel, "AI in the Classroom: New Assignments for a New Era," was offered in a hybrid format on October 2, 2024, and featured Dr. Christopher Bolden (Biology), Dr. Daniella Mascarenhas (Political Science), Ms. Laura Oliver (Art), and Dr. Quincy Hodges (Mass Communications). The discussion is available on our YouTube channel: https://youtu.be/L6GKQtJpupA.

Later that month, we hosted Dr. Stephen Aguilar, Associate Professor of Education at the USC Rossier School of Education. Dr. Aguilar had lunch with the FaCTS Fellows to learn about their projects and share some of his work as co-director of USC's Center for Generative AI and Society. Later that afternoon, Dr. Aguilar gave a talk to Xavier faculty titled "A Return to Human Intelligence: Understanding AI's Place in Educational Environments". The video of his presentation is also available on our YouTube channel: https://youtu.be/MikCEGQ7nqc.

Also in October, Dr. Todd, the new Director for the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Faculty Development gave a presentation at the Academic Assembly of Xavier's College of Arts and Sciences on AI policies, describing the need for the university to establish guidelines to help faculty craft Generative AI policies for their classes, while also explaining the inherent problems of systems claiming to be able to identify student work that has been generated by AI. The slidedeck for that presentation is available online: Generative Artificial Intelligence Policies.

In November Drs. Todd and Gstohl presented a workshop called "AI-powered Mentoring" to share with faculty some of the AI-powered productivity tools available to help them better organize their work with student researchers and to help their student researchers become more efficient. Details are on our wiki: https://catwiki.xula.edu/AI-Powered_Mentoring.

FaCTS Goals, Objectives, and Assessments

GOAL 1: TO HELP XAVIER FACULTY BECOME MORE SCHOLARLY TEACHERS

OBJECTIVE 1.1 Through the FaCTS Summer Seminar, participants will read, discuss, and utilize the scholarship of teaching and learning and infuse this work into their projects.

Assessments:

- *Evaluations of Seminar*. Evaluations of the 2024 Summer Seminar were quite positive. Twelve participants responded to the evaluation survey. Both the quality of the seminar and its usefulness scored a perfect five out of five.

1. Please rate the overall *quality* of the 2024 FaCTS Summer Seminar.

More Details Insights

Outstanding	12
Good	0
Average	0
Poor	0
Very poor	0

2. How likely are you to *use* the information from the 2024 FaCTS Summer Seminar in your teaching and/or professional life.

More Details

Extremely likely	12
Somewhat likely	0
Neither likely nor unlikely	0
Somewhat unlikely	0
Not at all likely	0

Additionally, we received positive qualitative responses.

3. What 2-3 topics or sessions did you find the most useful?

12 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Ethics in AI, Copyright in AI, and Privacy
2	anonymous	Variety of different AIs and AI generation for syllabi
3	anonymous	Learning about variety of forms of AI and what they can (and cannot) do, discussions of ethics of AI.
4	anonymous	The type of AI tools we can use, the conversations about accommodations, and the conversation about assignments
5	anonymous	A Brief History of AI, Ethical Education with AI, AI Policies in the Syllabus, Creating Assignments for AI, and AI Writing Detectors
6	anonymous	Show and Tell of AI Tools; AI Policies in the Syllabus; AI Writing Detection
7	anonymous	I found all of the topics useful.
8	anonymous	Brief History of AI by Bart; AI and ethics discussion by Elizabeth
9	anonymous	Bart's discussion of the history of AI and Elizabeth's explanation of her assignment structure and process
10	anonymous	AI assignments, history, ethics
11	anonymous	Ethics of AI use and AI policy
12	anonymous	Hands on exposure to so many of the AI-generating tools The AI policy examples for syllabus

- *Follow-up evaluations after projects are completed*. Given this is a spend-down grant, we were unable to access this.
- *Analysis of completed products to see whether Seminar topics were included.* We received final products from all 2024 FaCTS participants. All 16 participants included elements of

the FaCTS Seminar and theme in their products. Individual products can be viewed at https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1F_Q81RxxIbFi_n8w69jqdFWh-9IjX3ai?usp=sharing

OBJECTIVE 1.2 FaCTS participants will attend scholarly conferences related to teaching and learning.

Assessment:

- *Track number of SoTL conferences attended.* We included a workshop related to this topic in the Summer Seminar, encouraging participants to attend relevant conferences.

Prof. Laura Oliver attended #LTT2024 (Learning To Teach Creative Technologies with Generative AI), January 2024. She is currently registered to attend the Adobe Summit this March. Prof. Oliver also attended her professional organization conferences that featured a number of sessions on Generative AI: the Southern States Communication Association Conference in April 2024; and the National Communication Association Conference in November 2024.
https://wp.nyu.edu/ltt2025/
https://summit.adobe.com/na/
https://www.ssca.net/convention-information
https://www.natcom.org/111-annual-convention/

Last Spring, Dr. Lisa Schulte attended the SPSP (Society for Personality and Social Psychology) Annual Conference, which offered sessions on Generative AI within the discipline. This Spring, she is scheduled to attend NITOP (National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology), which will also offer sessions on Generative AI in the Psychology classroom.
https://spsp.org/events/past-and-future-conventions
https://nitop.org/page-18164

This summer, Dr. Daniella Mascarenhas attended the HBCU Faculty Development Network Summer Institute. The topic for this year's institute was "Professional Development in Learning Communities & Artificial Intelligence."
https://www.hbcufdn.org/summer-institute

Dr. Quincy Hodges has plans to attend the HBCU AI Conference and Training Summit this April. He is currently working through AI certification via John Hopkins University as well as participating in the AI4LN Project via UNCF.
https://hbcuaicon.com/
https://cpd.suny.edu/ai4ln/

Dr. Biljana Obradovic attended the Modern Language Association Annual Conference in January 2025, where she participated in sessions on Generative AI and the teaching of writing.
https://mla.confex.com/mla/2025/meetingapp.cgi

OBJECTIVE 1.3 FaCTS will provide support (both time and money) for faculty in planning, implementing, and assessing individual or collaborative curricular projects.

- *Track number of proposals.* We received 17 proposals for FaCTS 2024.
- *Track number of funded proposals.* The Mellon grant funded 16 projects.
- *Track demographics of participants.* The 2024 FaCTS cohort had broad participation. It consisted of tenured and untenured faculty from both colleges. The 16 represented departments are as follows:

- Art and Performance Studies
- Biology (4)
- Chemistry
- English
- Languages (2)
- Mass Communication
- Pharmacy
- Philosophy (2)
- Physics
- Political Science
- Psychology

Photo by Elliott Hammer

GOAL 2: TO ENCOURAGE XAVIER FACULTY INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

OBJECTIVE 2.1 FaCTS participants will present their own projects related to teaching and learning.

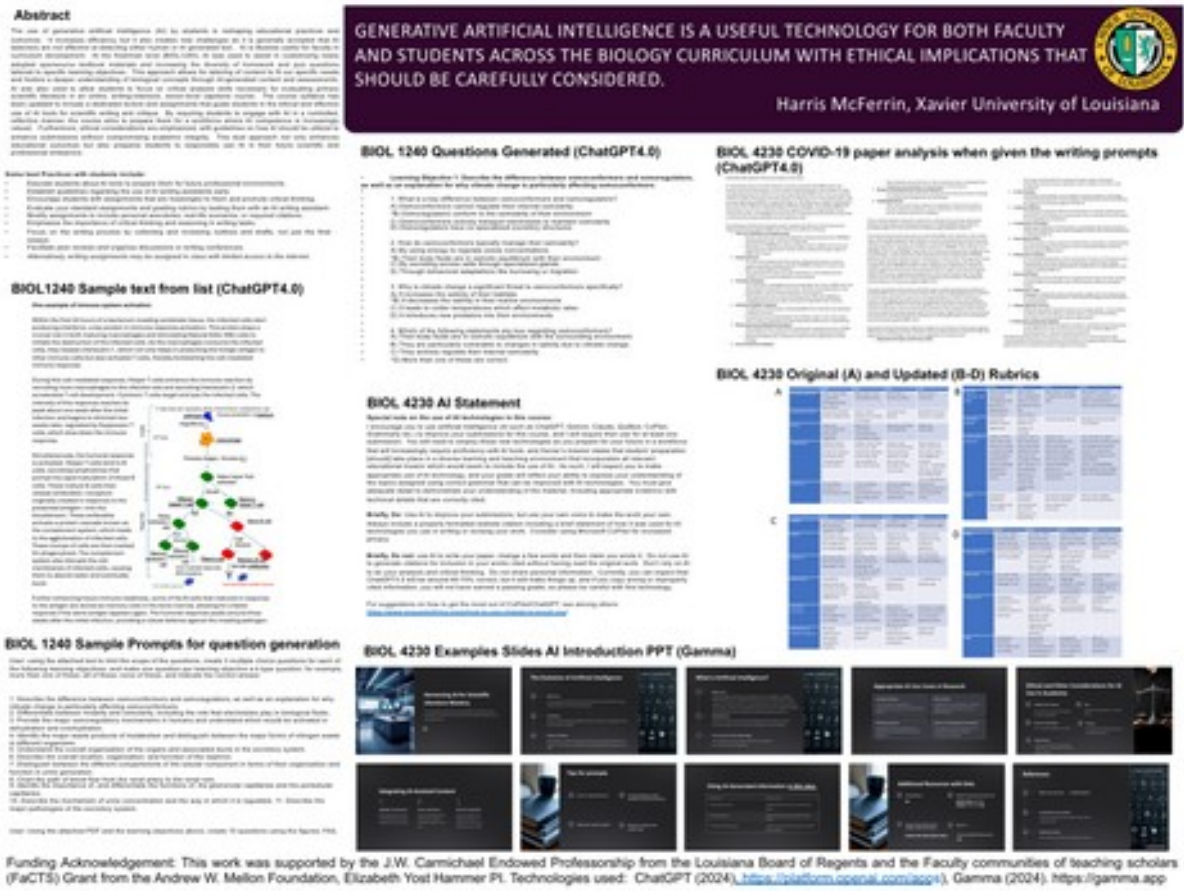
Assessment:

- *Track number of SoTL presentations given by participants.* We included a workshop related to this topic in the Summer Seminar, encouraging participants to present at relevant conferences.

Given the timing of this spend-down, we did not have long to assess this. We included a workshop related to this topic in the Summer Seminar, encouraging participants to present at relevant conferences.

Dr. Harris McFerrin presented a poster, "Generative Artifcial Intelligence Is a Useful Technology with Ethical Implications That Should Be Carefully Considered For Both Faculty and Students Across the Biology Curriculum," at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Science Education Alliance Annual Faculty Meeting in June, 2024.

Dr. McFerrin also gave an invited talk called "AI in Education and Research" at the Tulane Next Generation Sequencing / Louisiana Cancer Research Center Bioinformatics Group Meeting in December, 2024.



OBJECTIVE 2.2 FaCTS participants will publish their own projects related to teaching and learning.

Assessment:

Given the timing of this spend-down, we did not have long to assess this. We included a workshop related to this topic in the Summer Seminar, encouraging participants to publish in relevant journals.

GOAL 3: TO ENHANCE STUDENT LEARNING IN PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS, PROGRAMS AND MAJORS

OBJECTIVE 3.1 Curricular or course projects sponsored by FaCTS will meet the student learning outcomes stated in the project.

Assessment:

- *Work with faculty to measure student learning outcomes related to FaCTS projects.*

Given the theme of FaCTS 2024, faculty submitted a variety of products, not just student learning outcomes. All participants submitted final products and incorporated what they learned from the Summer Seminar.

Overall Assessment

Being able to spend down this grant will have a huge impact on our university. Generative artificial intelligence is posing a real challenge in higher education, and this grant has allowed our faculty the time to reflect on this issue, preparing them to meet the challenges head-on in an evidence-base and mission-driven manner. Further, FaCTS 2024 participants will be able to take what they learned in the Summer Seminar to their own departments and assist in training. This Mellon grant has placed our university ahead of the game in terms of effective teaching for *human learning in an AI world.*

Setbacks and Challenges

We did not experience any major setbacks or challenges.

Significant Staff Changes

Dr. Elizabeth Yost Hammer, Director of CAT+FD for the past 17 years was the original PI on this grant, and oversaw the development and implementation of the 2024 FaCTS Summer Seminar. She contributed to this final report through the end of June 2024. Effective July 1, 2024 she (by choice) transitioned from her Directorship back to her academic department full-time. Dr. Jason Todd is the new CAT+FD Director, and he completed and submitted this report as well as the final spend down of funds.

Plans and Goals for the Future

In February, we will offer two workshops on using AI in the classroom. Dr. Mark Gstohl, Associate Director, will lead a workshop called "Collaborative AI in the Classroom." This workshop will explore how AI can enhance teaching and learning by fostering deeper student engagement, streamlining instructional tasks, and promoting equitable educational outcomes. Dr. Jason Todd, Director, and Ms. Janice Florent, Technology Coordinator, will lead a workshop call "Rethinking Assessment Strategies in the Age of AI," which will focus on how faculty can better use the tools within our LMS, Brightspace, to help students learn to use AI as an educational tool.

Dr. Todd will also serve as the chair of a university-level *ad hoc* committee charged with developing a policy about Generative AI us for students, faculty, and staff. A number of the FaCTS

Fellows will also serve on that committee. A draft of the policy will be submitted to the Provost by the end of the Spring semester.

Financial Accounting

Attached to this report is the fiscal report in the format Mellon has requested, signed by our fiscal office.

Appendix

Xavier University of Louisiana
Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Faculty Development
***Faculty Communities of Teaching Scholars* (FaCTS)**
Request for Proposals

(Note: the illustration above was created by a large language model from Midjourney Inc., a startup in Silicon Valley that's focused on image synthesis.)

We invite you to apply for a Mellon Fellowship through the 2024 Faculty Communities of Teaching Scholars (FaCTS)!

FaCTS is funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support faculty in planning and implementing innovative curricular and/or pedagogical projects. FaCTS is intended to enhance scholarly teaching practices, encourage faculty involvement in the scholarship of teaching and learning, and ultimately enhance student learning experiences.

The theme for 2024 is "Human Learning in an AI World."

The introduction of AI into higher education presents both opportunities and challenges for faculty and students. AI has the potential to enhance and augment traditional teaching methods, such as providing personalized learning experiences and freeing up faculty time for more engaging and dynamic instruction. However, there are concerns about the impact of AI on academic integrity and the potential for displacement of human instructors. The challenge for educators is to find a balance between leveraging the benefits of AI while ensuring that the human element of teaching and learning is not lost.

(Note: the entire preceding paragraph was written by a large language model from Inflection AI Inc., a startup in Silicon Valley that's focused on building ethical and responsible artificial intelligence.)

If you are interested in learning more about this pedagogy and exploring the possibilities for your class or lab, then this is the FaCTS institute for you.

Eligibility
Any full-time faculty member (tenure track or non-tenure track) within the university may submit proposals.

Participation Requirements
FaCTS Summer Seminar. It is required that funded faculty members will be available in-person from 9:30AM-3:30PM, May 13-16, 2024 (the week immediately following graduation) to attend the FaCTS Summer Seminar. In addition to the coverage of the theme itself, the seminar will include sessions on innovations in pedagogy, student engagement, and teaching toward mission.

Monthly FaCTS Meetings and Workshops during the Spring 2024 semester. Before the summer seminar, Fellows will be expected to attend relevant AI workshops (with hybrid options). Further, CAT+FD will host monthly meetings to allow FaCTS Fellows to exchange ideas, discuss workshop topics, and troubleshoot projects.

Submission of product. At the end of the seminar, fellows will be expected to submit a revised syllabus, assignment, AI implementation plan, or other relevant product demonstrating an integration of the theme into a course or curriculum. These must be submitted by May 17, 2024, in order to receive payment.

Application Process
Faculty members should submit complete electronic copies of their proposals to the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Faculty Development via email (cat@xula.edu).

Due Date: No later than 4:00 p.m. on Friday, January 19, 2024

It is anticipated that up to 15 proposals will be funded. Fellows will receive $3,000 for their participation.

Proposal Criteria
The focus of 2024 FaCTS is to encourage faculty members to plan, implement, and evaluate courses/learning experiences related to the theme.

The following offers a **sample** listing of ideas that may be pursued for funding under this program:

- The creation of a new course/assignment/project/etc. that utilizes AI in learning;
- The restructuring of an existing course/assignment/project/etc. to include AI in learning;
- Utilizing AI in grading or assessment development;
- Using AI for more effective teaching;
- Other ideas based on documented research suggesting the effectiveness of the idea or innovative practice as related to AI learning.

Proposal Requirements and Format

1) **Cover Page** (see attached)

2) **Project Summary** (not to exceed 200 words): The project summary should provide a clear description of the proposed project along with a statement of objectives. In addition, it should include a brief description of how the project will operate and how it relates to the theme of Human Learning in an AI World.

3) **Narrative**: The narrative should not exceed three single-spaced pages and should address the following points:

0. *Project Description* – This section should clearly describe the proposed project. It should explain the logic underlying the proposed project. The ability to incorporate recent research findings regarding best practices into project design will strengthen the proposal. An outline of proposed goals and outcomes for the project should also be included.

0. *Relation to the Theme* – Briefly and clearly indicate how your proposed project contributes to the FaCTS theme of Human Learning in an AI World.

a. *Impact on Curriculum, Instruction, and Faculty Development* – Describe how the proposed project will impact existing course offerings, curriculum, and/or departmental, college, or university initiatives. Explain how the proposed project will enhance your own teaching effectiveness.

b. *Anticipated Product* – Explain what product you will work on during the seminar, and what product you will submit at the end (e.g., new or revised syllabus, assignment, project, plan for implementation)

c. *Statement of Commitment* – Finally, submit a statement of commitment to participate in the Spring 2024 workshops and monthly meetings and the FaCTS Summer Seminar.

Criteria for Assessment of Proposals
Proposals will be assessed based on the quality and specificity of each subsection and will be reviewed by CAT+FD staff in partnership with the Deans and VPAA Offices.

Schedule of Payment
Faculty members awarded funding under this initiative will receive their stipend after fully attending the FaCTS Summer Seminar *and* submitting their product by May 17, 2024.

Questions or Comments
Any questions about the FaCTS grant initiative or this RFP should be directed to
Dr. Elizabeth Yost Hammer at 520-5141/eyhammer@xula.edu.

Xavier University of Louisiana
Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Faculty Development
Faculty Communities of Teaching Scholars (FaCTS) 2024

Grant Proposal Cover Sheet

Name: _____
Department: _____
Title of Project: _____
Your Signature: _____
Department Head Signature: _____
Dean Signature: _____