

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

Introduction

The Faculty Communities of Teaching Scholars (FaCTS) initiative is funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support faculty in planning and implementing innovative curriculum and/or pedagogical projects over the course of an academic year. The expected outcomes of the initiative include enhancing scholarly teaching practices; encouraging faculty involvement in the scholarship of teaching and learning, and enhancing student learning experiences.

The theme of FaCTS for the 2010-2011 academic year is “Fostering Active Reading.” This theme allows faculty members to plan, implement and evaluate projects designed to promote active reading, improve students’ reading skills, and/or encourage students to become engaged readers both inside and outside the classroom.

For our purposes, *active reading* is defined as being able to engage critically any text in order to extract meaning from it and relate that meaning beyond the text.

Here's a link to a useful website: http://www.criticalreading.com/critical_reading.htm

Eligibility and Application Process

Proposals may be submitted by any full-time faculty member within the university. Faculty members should submit five (5) complete copies of their proposals to the Center for the Advancement of Teaching, Library 534, no later than 4:00 p.m. on December 4, 2009. It is anticipated that up to ten (10) proposals will be funded at \$3,000 each for faculty stipends plus up to an additional \$500 in funding for materials, supplies, etc. that are directly related to enhancing proposed projects. In addition, faculty will have up to \$1500 of funding to travel to teaching-related conferences to learn about the topic or to present their projects.

Funding decisions will be made and communicated to faculty in January 2010. See below for details regarding proposal requirements and format.

FaCTS Proposal Expectations

The focus of FaCTS for the 2010-2011 academic year is to encourage faculty members to plan, implement and assess projects designed to enhance active reading in our students while drawing on the scholarship of teaching and learning. Preference will be given to faculty who have not previously received funding through FaCTS. Preference will be given to proposals:

- a) targeting first year or second year students,
- b) targeting courses that departments have identified for QEP assessment,
- c) including specific activities or outcomes from the QEP action plan,
- d) including a scholarship of teaching and learning component,
- e) incorporating a service learning component, and/or
- f) directly tied to the mission of Xavier University.

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

- ◆ The creation of discipline-specific courses based on active reading;
- ◆ Restructuring of an existing course to infuse issues or assignments related to active reading;
- ◆ The inclusion of innovative student-centered teaching methods relying on extensive reading, writing and/or speaking, group projects, and other non-lecture formats;
- ◆ Direct involvement of undergraduate students in collaborative research projects with faculty;
- ◆ Other ideas based on documented research suggesting the effectiveness of the idea or innovative practice.

Proposal Requirements and Format

The following requirements and format for FaCTS proposals is strongly suggested:

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 will contribute to enhanced reading skills or reading engagement for students.

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

a) *Project Description* – This section should clearly describe the proposed project and how it addresses perceived student and/or university needs. 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.

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

c) *Evaluation Plan* – Explain how you will evaluate the success of the proposed project. Clearly describe the proposed data sources that you will use to document successful implementation and outcomes associated with the project.

Note: Awardees may be asked to collect and submit specific process and outcome-oriented evaluation data related to their projects in order to facilitate an overall assessment of the FaCTS.

d) *Budget* – Please include a budget narrative that explains if and how you intend to spend resources provided under this initiative during the project period.

e) *Timeline* – Please submit a brief time line for your project indicating when the course project would be implemented and evaluated.

f) *Statement of Commitment* – Finally, please submit a statement of commitment to participate in the FaCTS Summer Seminar and monthly meetings if funded through this initiative.

4) **Letter of Support:** Please attach a letter of support from the department chair or academic dean.

Criteria for Assessment of Proposals

Proposals will be assessed based on the quality and specificity of each subsection and will be reviewed by a subcommittee of the CAT Advisory Group and CAT staff.

Project Requirements

FaCTS Summer Seminar. It is anticipated that funded faculty members will be available from 9:30-3:30, May 10th-14th (the week immediately following graduation) to plan their projects and attend the FaCTS Summer Seminar. In addition to the coverage of the theme itself, the seminar will include sessions on innovations in pedagogy and instructional technology, Xavier's mission, and student engagement.

Monthly FaCTS Meeting during AY 10-11. During AY 10-11, while projects are being implemented, CAT will host monthly meetings to allow FaCTS participants to exchange ideas and troubleshoot projects. Grant recipients will be publicly recognized for their academic leadership and asked to share their knowledge and experiences with other colleagues across the university through CAT sessions or future FaCTS Summer Seminars.

Evaluation of Completed Projects. Faculty will be expected to evaluate their projects and provide evaluation reports to CAT.

Schedule of Payment

Faculty members awarded funding under this initiative will receive 50 % of their faculty stipend upon completing the FaCTS Summer Seminar in May 2010. The remaining 50 % of the stipend will be distributed upon submission of a new or revised syllabus corresponding to a course to be offered in Fall 2010 or Spring 2011 as well as course and evaluation data/results. Additional funds to purchase materials or support travel will be distributed upon submission of appropriate documentation verifying expenses.

Questions or Comments

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

**Xavier University of Louisiana
Center for the Advancement of Teaching
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Grant Proposal Cover Sheet

Name: _____

Department: _____

Mailing Information: _____

Title of Project: _____

Your Signature: _____

Chair Signature: _____

Associate Dean of Research Signature _____