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Washington University in St. Louis

GEPHARDT INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

2009-2010 Faculty Innovation Grants in Community-Based Teaching and Learning

Background

It is known anecdotally that faculty at Washington University utilize community-based teaching, immersing students in applied community projects to further their classroom learning. Taking different forms and referred to by different terms including “engaged research,” “experiential education,” and most commonly, “service-learning,” this pedagogical strategy has proven effective at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The University established the Gephardt Institute for Public Service (hereafter “the Institute”) in 2005, charging the Institute with maximizing and promoting initiatives that further academic learning while also inculcating a life-long ethic of civic engagement in our students. The promotion of service-learning is an integral strategy in support of this goal.

Employing a broad conception, the distinguishing features of service-learning include targeted learning activities in service to an organization or community, faculty oversight, and course content and assignments connected to the service. Currently Washington University offers more than 40 community-based courses across disciplines, and hopes to expand further. Examples of include the Taylor Community Consulting Program in the Olin School of Business, “Service-Learning: Projects in Domestic Violence,” in the College of Arts & Sciences and “Community Development in the Ville: Community Supported Agriculture” in the Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts. Faculty who already embrace service-learning find that students as well as organizations and communities benefit locally, nationally, and internationally.

Grants Program Overview

By virtue of their connections and known expertise, faculty have ideas or learn of projects appropriate for service-learning. To turn those ideas into reality, faculty may need resources, including teaching assistance, supplies, etc. The Institute administers a grants program to provide support for faculty innovation in service-learning.

The grants are applicable to courses that range from small seminars to larger lectures or even traditional lab-based courses. They also may be of any discipline and at the undergraduate or graduate level. Service may either comprise the entire focus of the proposed course, or be a discrete but major component of the course. The service may be an individual hands-on community service endeavor or a group project(s). The service component should be stated in the syllabus as well as incorporated in the course goals and objectives. Assessment of student learning for the course, including grading criteria and assignments, should be connected to service in some way.

Five grants of \$2,500 each will be awarded in December 2009 for service-learning courses developed and offered in the spring 2010 semester or the following academic year, either fall or spring semester. Faculty from all departments and schools are encouraged to respond.

Funding Possibilities

The Gephardt Institute Faculty Innovation Grants cover a wide range of curriculum development expenses, including the following:

- Salary support for faculty time, e.g., summer salary as related to the course
- Stipends to support a teaching assistant, training, etc.
- Transportation costs to community site
- Books and other resource materials
- Materials to implement project, such as office, building, or art supplies, software or equipment, etc.

Criteria for Selection

Innovation

- The proposal should enhance an existing course with the addition of a meaningful service component or pertain to a new course which incorporates service-learning and has departmental approval.

Applicability

- The proposal should emphasize the theory or research that will be applied and how classroom learning will be linked with the service project.

Outcomes

- The proposal should detail the project and its potential benefit for the community and the students.
- The proposal should detail specific strategies for assessment of student learning, including grading criteria and assignments.

Sustainability

- The proposal should demonstrate that the course is potentially replicable and has potential for impact beyond its duration.

Application Instructions

The preferred format for the proposal is Microsoft Word, single-spaced with one inch margins on all sides, using a 12 point sans serif font.

Cover Page

- Faculty name, title, email, phone, and mailing address
- Sponsoring department or program or school
- Departmental business office contact name and email
- Name of proposed course or project

- Indication of undergraduate or graduate course and corresponding level, if applicable
- Semester to be offered or implemented
- Scope of service: local, national, or international
- Community partner(s) and organization(s), if applicable

Application

Please use the following headings for separate application sections and provide a short narrative for each. Do not exceed two pages total.

- **Course Overview:** A brief overview of the proposed course
- **Description of Service and Its Relevance:** The nature of the service to be provided, its relation to the course content, and how it will contribute to student learning
- **Community Outcomes:** Projected outcomes for the organization and/or community
- **Student Outcomes:** Projected outcomes for the students and how they may apply the experience
- **Timeline:** A proposed timeline for the course and the service project(s)

Budget

- Show estimated expenditures and how the requested funds will be applied and when, as well as additional resources for funding, if available

Deadline

Please submit your proposal electronically as an attachment in Microsoft Word to gephardt@wustl.edu by **5pm on December 1, 2009**. Your proposal will be reviewed by a group of faculty peers and awards will be announced on December 18, 2009, for courses offered in the spring 2010 semester or the fall or spring semester of the following academic year.

Recipient Requirements

Please note that grantees from the prior cycle are not eligible to apply. In addition to utilizing grant funding to carry out the proposed activities, the Institute requests faculty recipients to submit a one to two page final report within six weeks of the end of the course. This report should detail how the funds were spent and include faculty evaluation of the educational value of the course for the students as well as the impact of the service on the targeted community. If the course will be offered again, faculty may also include strategies for improvement or expansion.

Faculty receiving Gephardt Institute Faculty Innovation Grants may be invited to participate in activities related to service-learning, such as brown bag sessions or conferences. Grant recipients may also be asked to share photos and quotes through the Institute website, University publications, a poster at Faces of Hope, or other means of communication with the campus community. Students may likewise be contacted for testimonial and feedback.

Contact Information

For questions regarding this initiative, please contact Jenni Harpring, program manager, at the Gephardt Institute for Public Service, (935-8182, jharpring@wustl.edu).