



Innovative Teaching Grants: Support for Faculty Creativity in Teaching

Deadline for Submitting Proposals to your Dean:
Friday, January 25, 2008

The University of South Florida is pleased to announce the Innovative Teaching Grants Program. The following campuses are eligible for funding: Tampa Academic Affairs (including Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Education, Engineering, FMHI, Honors, Marine Science, Visual and Performing Arts, and School of Architecture and Community Design), Lakeland, and Sarasota.

Funding is available for **two categories** of faculty and department proposals:

(1) Category One: Creative classroom pedagogies and technology-enhanced teaching

Category One awards are designed to encourage instructional innovation and efforts to enhance student learning through new approaches to classroom instruction, both at the level of the individual course and at the level of the department when more than one course is involved. Resources requested may include faculty preparation time, skill-development activities, and technical support assistance. Examples of appropriate areas are course enrichment, course-related travel, curriculum development and evaluation, undergraduate research, service learning, use of active learning strategies, incorporation of multicultural perspectives, and development of new teaching expertise.

(2) Category Two: Degree or Certificate program conversion to online delivery

Category Two awards are for departments or programs that seek to convert a set of face-to-face courses in a degree or certificate program into a fully online format. Resources requested will include a faculty stipend either for release time or for an instructional overload. Category Two awards will also include technical and design services, which will be provided by the Center's Media Innovation Team (MIT). Category Two involves two steps. The first step is to submit an application based on the proposal guidelines in this document. The second step is an interview with Center staff to determine 1) the appropriateness of the degree or certificate program for online learning and 2) the potential for maintaining quality instruction along with conversion of content.

Please read carefully both the application information below and the Frequently Asked Questions found later in this announcement.

PROGRAM GOALS: This initiative addresses three interrelated goals:

- To support faculty efforts to improve student learning through innovation in teaching
- To encourage faculty efforts to assess and document the effectiveness of their instructional improvement efforts
- To provide professional growth opportunities for, and collaboration among, USF faculty

PROPOSER ELIGIBILITY: Tenured or tenure-earning faculty, librarians, and full-time instructors on continuing instructional appointments are eligible to submit one grant application per year. Applications from teams of collaborating proposers are also invited; however, an individual cannot be named on two grant applications. To maximize program resources, faculty in Category One are not eligible for grant funding in two consecutive years. Proposals in Category Two, degree or certificate program online conversion proposals, may take longer than one year to become operational.

Categories One and Two are addressed separately below.

Category One: Instructional Innovation

Category One PROPOSAL GUIDELINES: In Category One, first and foremost, grant proposals should describe projects that clearly go beyond the normal level of course preparation expected of all faculty and should describe the specific ways in which the project will enhance student learning.

The maximum grant award in Category One will be \$4,000 for single-course projects or \$10,000 for collaboration at the department or program level.

Proposals for over \$4,000 must include a letter of support from the department chair explaining how the project will benefit the department or unit as a whole. Proposals requiring less than the award limit are encouraged while those requiring greater levels of support should specify the source of additional funding that will be used to complete the project.

Proposals for activities, assistance, or equipment normally supported at the department or college level are not eligible for funding. Funding can be requested for:

- Significantly improving courses through innovative approaches to teaching and learning with or without the use of instructional technology.
- Purchase of instructional materials and/or equipment

- Summer stipends for faculty (up to \$2,500)
- Student assistants for instructional projects
- Participation in training programs or conferences on teaching to enhance instruction
- Travel costs and/or honoraria for consultants to address instructional issues

With regard to the purchase or upgrading of computer equipment, computers are recognized as a necessary tool for all faculty and should be requested from the department or college. Funds can only be requested to purchase specialized computer resources that will be devoted specifically to instructional purposes in innovative projects designed to improve student learning. Funds similarly cannot be requested for routine purchases of computer projection devices; funds to purchase such devices or to access existing devices on campus are available from other sources. **A grant proposal that requests funds for a computer purchase for instructional uses should also describe the plan for obtaining access to computer projection resources for the classroom.**

Category One SELECTION CRITERIA: In Category One, the Proposal Review Committee will carefully review all proposals based on the following five criteria:

- Project impact – the potential to enhance student learning in ways that can be demonstrated. This will be the primary selection criterion. Other types of impact may include the proposed project’s ability to serve as a model that is generalizable to other settings on campus or to affect a large number of students. Proposals for over \$4,000 should clearly demonstrate impact at the department or unit level.
- Project uniqueness – the attempt to transform the teaching/learning enterprise by employing innovative teaching alternatives to traditional classroom instruction.
- Project feasibility – the proposer’s likelihood of completing the project on schedule and with the resources provided.
- Proposer’s qualifications – the demonstrated commitment to teaching improvements and/or technology-enhanced teaching. Other qualifications can include documented record of excellence in teaching the course for which funds have been sought.
- Project evaluation plan – the proposal must include a substantial plan to judge the project’s effect on teaching and learning.

Proposers should remember that the clarity and completeness of the proposal will have a significant impact on the reviewers’ ability to assess project potential. A faculty committee will review the proposals.

Category One PROCEDURE: Submit five copies of the application. Project applications should contain three items as described below – (I) an Application Cover Sheet, (II) a brief narrative description, and (III) a letter of support from your department chairperson (five copies).

I. Category One APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Include the words CATEGORY ONE, your name, department, academic rank, mail point, phone, fax, email address, project title, and a project abstract (a clear 100-150 word description).

II. Category One NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Include a brief narrative description of the project (maximum length is five single-spaced pages) addressing each of the following eight questions:

1. What course will this project benefit? How often do you teach this course, and how many students annually enroll in your sections? Please attach the syllabus from the last time you taught this class.
2. What specific pedagogic or technology-based instructional innovation would grant funds enable you to make in this course?
3. Will this project produce any instructional materials, products, or generalizable ideas that can be shared with other instructors? If yes, please describe what and how.
4. What is the proposed project budget? Be specific about the salary rate and expected workload of student/staff assistants and/or the amount of time you will devote to the project if you are seeking a summer stipend.
5. What specific types of (a) pedagogic or instructional design assistance, (b) computer training, (c) technical assistance, and/or (d) non-technical support will you need to complete the proposed project?
6. What is the project time line?
7. How will you assess the impact of this project? Please explain steps you will take to determine the results of the project in terms of (a) enhanced student learning and (b) your own ongoing teaching improvement.
8. What prior evidence of your demonstrated commitment to creative teaching pedagogies or technology-enhanced teaching can you provide?

III. Category One LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM YOUR DEPARTMENT CHAIR

While all proposals are required to have a letter of support from the department chair, letters of support for proposals over \$4,000 should explain how the proposal will benefit the department or unit.

DEADLINES: The date for submitting applications to your College or Campus Dean is **Friday, January 25, 2008**. Deans are asked to review the proposals and, if desired, suggest a ranking of the proposals. Each Dean's office should forward proposals to the Center for 21st Century Teaching Excellence by **Friday, February 1, 2008**.

Awards will be announced no later than Friday, March 7, 2008.

PROJECT COMPLETION AND RESULTS:

Funded projects in Category One should be completed by June 1, 2009. A final project report, describing in detail project activities and accomplishments, should be completed and submitted to the Center for 21st Century Teaching Excellence by this date.

Participants will also be asked to share their projects with colleagues during the spring of 2009 (e.g., by presenting a "session/demonstration" in some USF forum).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS about Category One:

To help faculty prepare the highest quality and most competitive proposals possible, the following **Frequently Asked Questions** have been developed based upon lessons learned in previous years:

- **Are the grants only for projects involving technology?**

These grants can be sought for all ideas to enhance student learning through innovative teaching. Projects may or may not involve technology.

- **Can a grant be requested to create a new course?**

These funds cannot be requested to support activities that are considered part of a faculty member's annual teaching or research assignment or which are normally funded by a department or college. Therefore, explain why the creation of a new course or revision of an existing course is not part of your normally assigned duties.

- **What does the committee look for when reading proposals?**

In addition to strict adherence to the guidelines, the committee expects well conceived and carefully written proposals. With respect to the budget, items should be detailed and explicitly connected to project goals. Proposers should pay careful attention to the selection criteria to ensure that proposals persuasively address selection criteria, including the plan to evaluate the project's impact.

- **How specific should the proposed project budget be?**

The budget should provide sufficient details for the selection committee to determine the reasonableness and efficacy of the request. For example:

If requesting a \$2500 summer stipend for faculty, indicate the amount of time per week that will be devoted to completing the project.

If requesting funds to hire an assistant, describe the tasks she/he will perform, the numbers of hours worked weekly, and the anticipated hourly wage.

If requesting travel funds, a description of why this travel could not be supported through usual funding channels should be provided along with an itemized estimate of project related travel expenses.

If requesting funds to purchase materials or equipment, an itemized description of all materials to be purchased should be provided (e.g. not simply indicating, "\$1,000 to purchase films, books, and software").

- **What kinds of equipment purchase requests are discouraged?**

Requests for items that primarily benefit the effectiveness or efficiency of one's department (e.g., a photocopy machine, a computer server, standard laboratory equipment), rather than a thoughtfully described and detailed plan to enhance student learning in the context of one or more courses, are discouraged.

- **What will the committee look for with regard to the hiring of student assistants?**

Funding for graduate assistants can be requested for innovative tasks that enrich the graduate experience in ways not supported through other means. Funding cannot be requested for graduate assistants to perform duties traditionally supported at the department level, whether or not your department has had graduate assistants in the past. Proposals should also include a rationale for the level of student assistance requested (e.g., Graduate student or undergraduate student).

- **Can the funds be used to support undergraduate research?**

These funds can be used to foster research projects that involve undergraduate students if the project is course-related or if the project is department-sanctioned. Special attention should be paid to goals and student-learning outcomes.

- **Can the funds be requested to support domestic or international travel?**

Requests for funds for both domestic and international travel will be considered if the proposal clearly demonstrates that the travel is directly related to the

enrichment of the teaching and learning in a specific course and also that funds are not routinely available from other sources (e.g., Faculty International Travel Grant Program).

- **Can these funds be used to design and conduct student-learning outcomes assessment activities?**

These funds can be used for activities that relate to the design and conduct of student-learning outcomes assessment, both at the department/program level and at the individual course level.

- **Can the funds be requested to support production of instructional videotapes?**

Producing high quality videos or DVDs for instructional purposes is typically both time consuming and expensive. Proposals for such productions should describe how a quality project can be completed within the funding and time limits of this grant program. The proposed budget should contain thoughtfully detailed and itemized proposed expenditures (e.g., not simply "\$250 for professional film editing and duplication").

- **What if a project requires more than the maximum funding available to complete?**

In Category One, funding requests are limited to \$4,000 for single-course projects or \$10,000 for collaborations at the department or program level. If your proposed project requires greater funding, you must describe where the additional funding will come from and provide with your proposal definite confirmation that these additional funds are available.

- **Can funds be requested by a faculty member who has previously completed a workshop on the use of such technology tools as PowerPoint, Blackboard, or Videoconferencing?**

Proposals to simply create PowerPoint slides or a Web site for a course are discouraged as are projects that can be completed simply by participating in workshops on technology-enhanced teaching offered to faculty. Funds for specific courses, however, can be requested to support in-depth, innovative applications of technology that go well above and beyond what can be accomplished in available workshops. The Project Selection Committee will want to see a clear and specific plan that demonstrates the innovative nature and potential instructional impact of the proposed project.

Category Two: Degree or Certificate Program Conversion of Courses to Online Delivery

Category Two PROPOSAL GUIDELINES: Category Two proposals are focused on programs that are ready to convert courses in order to offer complete degrees or certificates online. Each course in a successful proposal's degree or certificate program will merit the following:

- A faculty stipend of \$2500 for development of the online course as a conversion from the face-to-face course (either in the form of release time or instructional overload as determined by the program administrators and faculty)
- A faculty stipend of \$1500 for the implementation of the new online course in the initial delivery phase
- Assignment to a team of instructional designers in the Media Innovation Team (MIT) of the Center for 21st Century Teaching Excellence

Category Two SELECTION CRITERIA: In Category Two, the Proposal Review Committee will carefully review proposals based on the following criteria:

- Project impact – The proposal clearly shows the final outcome will be the availability of the entire degree or certificate program online. This will be the primary selection criterion.
- Project feasibility – The proposal indicates the readiness of the department or program chair and faculty to undertake the project. The proposal clearly demonstrates how the courses lend themselves to online delivery. The proposal includes the results of market research or other evidence that clearly shows the need for the online degree or certificate program.
- Project Commitment – Program faculty show a commitment to teaching and evidence of a collaborative approach to the process of converting a degree or certificate program to the online format. The proposal indicates the commitment of all faculty involved in the project, as well as a commitment to work closely with the Media Innovation Team instructional design team.

Category Two PROCEDURE: Submit five copies of the application. Project applications should contain three items as described below – (I) an Application Cover Sheet, (II) a brief narrative description, and (III) a letter of support from your department chairperson (five copies).

I. Category Two APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Include the words CATEGORY TWO, the name of the contact faculty member, the names of all relevant faculty in the program, department, academic rank, mail point, phone, fax, email address, project title, and a project abstract (a clear 100-150 word description).

II. Category Two NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Include a brief narrative description of the project (maximum length is five single-spaced pages) addressing each of the following eight questions:

1. What degree or certificate program will these funds benefit? Please attach syllabi for all affected courses.
2. In what ways are the courses in this program appropriate for online delivery? Are other similar courses here or elsewhere being taught online? How have you determined the market for this online degree or certificate?
3. Will this conversion project be a model for other degree or certificate programs? If yes, please describe how.
4. What is the proposed timeline for the entire project? (The timetable may represent more than one year and should be delineated by semester.)
5. What is the proposed number of faculty stipends for development (@ \$2500) and delivery (@ \$1500) phases of the project? Please specify by semester.
6. How will you and your colleagues make time to interface with the Center's Media Innovation Team (MIT) if stipends are for an instructional overload? Or, will faculty be given release time to work with the MIT?
7. How will your program assess the success of this online conversion project? Please be specific in terms of quality of instruction and student learning, retention, and graduation. Please include ways to demonstrate improvement of faculty skills in online teaching.

III. Category Two LETTER OF COMMITMENT FROM DEPARTMENT CHAIR

All Category Two proposals require a letter of commitment from the department or program chair.

DEADLINES: The date for submitting applications to your College or Campus Dean is **Friday, January 25, 2008**. Deans are asked to review the proposals and forward them to the Center for 21st Century Teaching Excellence by **Friday, February 1, 2008**. An interview with the proposal author(s) and key members of the department or program faculty conversion team, including the department or program chair, will be arranged by the Center after February 1st. Final announcement of awards will be by March 7, 2008.

Please contact Bridget Patel of the Media Innovation Team if you have technical questions about the process of online course conversion: bridgetp@admin.usf.edu

PROJECT COMPLETION AND RESULTS:

Funded projects in Category Two will have a completion deadline based on the timeline presented in the proposal. An annual project report, describing in detail project activities and accomplishments, should be completed and submitted to the Center for 21st Century Teaching Excellence by the deadline assigned at the time that the award is made.

Participants will also be asked to share their projects with colleagues during the process or upon completion (e.g., by presenting a “session/demonstration” in some USF forum or, if appropriate, at the Symposium on 21st Century Teaching Technologies which takes place annually during the spring semester).

For additional information about either Category One or Category Two, please contact:

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For information about the technical aspects of the online course conversion process, please email Bridget Patel of the Center’s Media Innovation Team at bridgetp@admin.usf.edu