

Blended Learning (Humanities and Humanistic Social Sciences)

Proposals Due Sunday, January 31, 2016

Five Colleges invites proposals for pilot projects that combine on-line and in-person forms of student engagement (“blended learning”) as a means of advancing student learning in the humanities and humanistic social sciences. These awards are supported by the Five College Deans and a multi-year grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The goal of the grant is to engage faculty members in the exploration and evaluation of blended learning’s potential to enrich teaching and learning in liberal arts settings.

Proposals are welcome from individual faculty members at one of the five institutions or teams of faculty members and instructional technology or library specialists. Projects need not be explicitly designed to serve courses on more than one campus, but we encourage projects that are developed collaboratively. Results of each project will be shared across the consortium. We especially seek proposals in two broad areas, language learning and research methods, but half of all funded proposals will likely be for projects supporting student learning outside these target areas.

Leaders of funded projects (8-10 in each year of the grant) will join a summer institute May 24-27, 2016. The institute will offer time for project work as well as orientation to online technologies, blended course design, and the latest research on how students learn, particularly in blended learning environments. Work during the institute, including developing plans for measuring student success in achieving learning goals identified by the project, will be supported by faculty mentors with experience in blended learning. Assistance and advice will also be available from instructional technology and instructional design specialists. Assistance for project leaders will continue to be provided throughout the summer and during the following academic year as project work is completed. Support from the grant will include summer stipends for project leaders (\$3,000) and additional funding (up to \$10,000 per project) for other project needs (e.g., hiring a replacement to teach a course that the faculty member temporarily relinquishes while developing materials for the project, summer stipends for additional faculty participants, honoraria for consultants, travel, additional student assistants, purchase of materials, etc.). Staff members at any of the five campuses cannot receive a stipend. However, a contribution to professional development funds is possible when staff members take on aspects of the project that go beyond offering IT support, such as co-teaching a course. Five College faculty members cannot be compensated for guest lectures.

Under the terms of our grant from the Mellon Foundation, Five Colleges must assume ownership of intellectual property produced with grant funds in order to ensure it remains freely available to the public for educational and scholarly use. We have developed an intellectual property [statement](#) and [agreement](#) that may be consulted online. Successful applicants will need to sign this agreement as a condition of funding.

Proposals (2-4 pages) must:

- Identify project goals (e.g., overcoming particular student learning challenges, introducing new content to a course, supporting skills development, improving student engagement, expanding learning communities, improving opportunities for assessing student learning throughout a course, etc.);
- Describe the project and particularly how the online and in-person components of the project will relate to one another and how student participation in online components will be continuously evaluated as part of course work;
- Provide evidence of a preliminary literature review identifying publicly available materials that could be adapted to serve project purposes. (Proposers should take care to investigate resources supporting online learning that have already been developed. Helpful sites include the Bryn Mawr-Carnegie Mellon OLI collaboration (<http://nextgenlearning.blogs.brynmawr.edu/>) and the University of Central Florida (<http://blended.online.ucf.edu/>).
- Reflect on ways the success of the project might be measured, with particular attention to how online course components help students achieve learning goals identified by the project.
- Outline a tentative work plan and budget for the project during the summer and academic year following the summer institute and a date for launching the revised course or course modules or other project outcome. (We anticipate these tentative work plans and budgets will be revised in the course of the summer institute.)
- Describe the project's technical support requirements and identify one or more campus-based staff persons with whom you have consulted and who have agreed to participate in your project as your IT liaison.

Required: Please consult with your IT department well in advance of the February deadline (ideally, before winter break) in order to:

- a. ensure the feasibility of your project and technical support from your campus.**
- b. identify an IT liaison that will work with you on this project for the entire grant period. We strongly recommend that this IT liaison attend most, if not all, of the Summer Institute in May.**

Proposals will be evaluated for award with reference to the following objectives, although no proposal will be expected to address all of these:

- Enhances student engagement and learning in the humanities and humanistic social sciences;
- Enhances opportunities for students to learn effectively and collaboratively in and out of the classroom;
- Involves faculty members from multiple campuses in developing the project and/or demonstrates multi-campus interest in the project outcome;

- Offers potential for a single course—or course modules—to be shared across multiple campuses;
- Utilizes resources efficiently (i.e., adapts or utilizes an existing resource);
- Lowers barriers discouraging students from taking courses at another campus, thereby expanding the range of courses accessible to students (currently these are primarily transportation barriers and the frequency of course meetings);
- Expands the access of students to a wider set of curricular offerings;
- Strengthens a multi-campus program;
- Improves learning outcomes in ways that can be assessed;
- Is feasible – that is, the project is within our capacity to provide needed support, such as funds, mentors and instructional technologists; and
- In the case of developing a new course, has endorsement from a department or program chair concurring that resources are currently available to allow the faculty member to teach the new course.

Proposals are due by the end of **Sunday, January 31, 2016** and should be submitted using the online application form at <https://www.fivecolleges.edu/blended/apply/bl-humanities-application-2016>. Proposals will be reviewed by the project steering committee for curricular and intellectual merit, but also with regard for our capacity to meet the technical needs of the project from Five College or campus-based resources as confirmed by offices on the campuses. Awards will be announced by April 15th. Persons interested in submitting a proposal are encouraged to consult with Nate Therien, Five College Director for Academic Programs (ntherien@fivecolleges.edu).