FRESNO STATE

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OFFICE OF THE PROVOST/VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

AY 2016-17 Call For Proposals
Assessing Core Competencies in
Student Learning & Using the Results for Program Improvement

Overview

The assessment of student learning, student development, and program outcomes is essential to the health and vitality of academic programs at California State University, Fresno. The purpose of implementing student outcomes assessment is to *advance student learning through improved curricula and instruction*. In support of this purpose at the program and department levels, this Call For Proposals (CFP) solicits proposals to *assess core competencies in student learning and using the results for program improvement.* In contrast to opinion surveys and instruments that gather self-reports of student knowledge, successful proposals must use direct measures of student learning to gauge the depths of their core competencies in one or more of the five areas:

1) Oral Communication; 2) Written Communication;
3) Critical Thinking 4) Information Literacy and 5) Quantitative Skills

Examples of direct measures include tests, portfolios, performances or presentations, capstone projects, term papers, entrance and exit exams, and licensure pass rates.

Proposals may seek funding in one of the following areas:
- To develop and implement E-portfolios that record direct measures of student learning that assess abilities or competencies in one or more of the five core areas mentioned above. These measures, including scoring rubrics, will be administered across course sections and measure what students know and/or can do at a specific stage of their academic program;
- To examine core competencies with DISCOVERe course experiences;
- To examine core competencies with Capstone course experiences;
- To design and conduct evaluation studies that document student learning in *Redesigned Courses* and/or in courses that employ *Supplementary Instruction*, as related to one or more of the core competencies, and to identify effective strategies to improve curriculum and instruction;
- Other projects that measure student learning in one or more of the five core competencies.

The successful proposal must include activities that close the loop in instruction, and/or curriculum, based on findings from the measures of student learning.

Care should be given in the proposal to connecting the proposed activities to stated goals and objectives of the program SOAP (Student Outcomes Assessment Plan). If the activity projected is not specifically related to the SOAP, additional justification should address the value of the proposed activity to the program's on-going assessment activities.

The successful applicant for this grant proposal shall submit a final report of his/her proposed project and activities, in a format appropriate for presentation to the academic community of Fresno State and for inclusion in a University publication on assessment. Final reports will be due two weeks after completion of the project and will be posted on the Fresno State website. Note: This project must produce findings and there must be evidence that those findings have been disseminated to program faculty and are being used by the end of the grant period.

Eligibility

Any individual or team representing an academic program or department may submit a proposal for the program or department. The proposal must contain a supporting letter from the chairperson or program coordinator (*See below*). Teams may include partnerships with units outside of individual departments, such as General Education, the Honors College, or service providers for core classes to a program, in which case supporting letters from all chairpersons involved should be included. College teams are encouraged to submit proposals that coordinate assessment of common learning outcomes across their college or school, and that substantially improve the overall assessment activities of the departments involved.

Application Materials and Procedure

One hard copy and an electronic copy of the following materials should be addressed to the **Assessment Grant Project Faculty Review Committee**, **via Marie Fernandez (mfernandez@csufresno.edu)**, 4th Floor, Haak Administrative Center, Henry Madden Library, M/S ML47, by 5 p.m., May 20, 2016.

1. A proposal narrative of maximum five pages, single-spaced, 12-point font that addresses:
   a. The integration of proposed practices with on-going program/departmental activities and their relationship to the SOAP (or SOAPs if the project partners with units outside individual departments)
   b. Methodologies/procedures to implement
   c. Anticipated impact of the project, including
      i. improvements in specifically delineated areas of curricula or teaching
      ii. on-going benefits beyond the year of the proposal completion
   d. Project time line (project to be completed by the end of the Spring 2017 term)

In addition to the narrative, proposal appendices should include (only):

2. A detailed, itemized budget up to **$3,000**. Funds may be used for faculty professional development, release time, student salaries, purchase of test materials, travel related to the purpose of the grant or other necessities to accomplish the goal of the grant. Applicants may request funding exceeding $3,000 with justification.
3. A support letter from the chairperson or program coordinator and the college/school Dean. The Dean's signature represents agreement to the grant fund release arrangement stated in the *Grant Awarding Procedures and Requirement* section below.
4. A copy of the current program/departmental SOAP (or SOAPs if project partners with units outside individual departments). Include a brief summary of progress to date implementing the SOAP(s).

Time Frame

Proposals must be submitted no later than 5 p.m., May 20, 2016. Notification of awards will be made before the close of spring term 2016. Funding is for summer 2016 through spring 2017 term and must be spent before the last day of instruction in spring term 2017.

Selection Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed and ranked by an Assessment Grant Project Faculty Review Committee along with the Associate Vice President of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The criteria for selection include the following:

- Submission of all required proposal components
- A well written and complete narrative that follows all criteria in the Application Materials and Procedure section above
- A project that utilizes direct measures of assessing learning outcomes in the said core competency area(s).
- A project with good fit between objectives and methodologies
- A project that demonstrates clear intent to use the results for program improvements to curricula and teaching
- A project that can be completed with use of results in progress prior to the end of the funding period.
- A project with potential impact for on-going benefits beyond 2016-17.
- An appropriate, logical, and reasonable budget
- Projects that build on ongoing assessment work or that are innovative and offer the potential to make a significant contribution to improved student learning will be given highest priority. Additional funding for such projects may be available after their completion if the project and use of results warrant publication or conference presentation.

Grant Awarding Procedures and Requirements

Grants will not be issued until the project reaches a SATISFCTORY completion and a final report that meets all requirements is submitted. If funds are needed for travel, training and/or hiring student workers, Colleges and Schools will fund the project and get reimbursed when the project is completed.

A project is completed satisfactorily if

1) All stated direct measures have been employed, tested and implemented in the project;
2) The studied core competency or competencies are measured on a scientific sample of students so that results could be generalized to a larger student population; or the total student population was included in the study (if this applies);
3) The measured competency or competencies are thoroughly analyzed and evaluated in relevance to our diverse students, and areas of improvement are identified;
4) Closing the loop actions or proposed closing the loop actions are included in the study and address the areas that need improvement. These actions may include but are not limited to curriculum revision, pedagogical redesign, use of new technology, and use of innovative textbooks;
5) A professionally formatted report that uses one of the major citation conventions (APA, ASA, etc.); and
6) Timely completion of the grant project and submission of the final report.

Visit the OIE website at http://www.fresnostate.edu/academics/oie/assessment/projects.html to see **Tips for Getting the Grant**, including proposal examples.