

2021-22 Backwards Design across the Curriculum

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Deadline: November 15, 2021

Individual courses are designed to support course-specific student learning outcomes, but sometimes the connections among individual courses to help achieve overall program learning goals are less clear. While students may continually encounter certain program outcomes across courses, they may receive fewer opportunities to develop others.

This grant program seeks to support pairs of faculty members from the same major to examine their own courses and how they fit into the larger program in supporting student growth in program learning outcomes. Using the principles of backwards design, we will help faculty examine their own courses as well as their program's curriculum (including the deployment of high impact practices (HIPs)) to help improve student learning.

We seek at least one team from each college to build a collaborative, supportive group focused on cross-disciplinary dialogue, structured learning activities, and reflection. The goal of the project will be for each team to design backwards from student learning outcomes to create assessments that measure these outcomes and course activities that support students in achieving these outcomes. Faculty will work to revise existing assignments or create new assignments and syllabi that deepen students' program learning outcomes or proficiency with crosscutting liberal arts skills such as written and oral communication, critical thinking, teamwork/collaboration, intercultural knowledge & competence, and quantitative literacy. Special consideration will be given to those project proposals that seek to incorporate design elements promoting equity in the curricula and/or instruction.

Faculty participants in this project will be expected to attend a two-day workshop on January 11-12, 2022 in which strategies for backwards design and curriculum mapping will be presented and discussed. Dr. Lisa Zawilinski, Executive Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence & Innovation, will lead this workshop. She will provide a framework for course and program analysis, instructional design and assessment principles, curriculum mapping and specific guidance on the participants' projects. In the spring semester, faculty participants will collaborate during monthly learning community (LC) meetings to share ideas, discuss resources, and brainstorm solutions to problems.

Each participant will be awarded \$1,250 for attending the January workshop, fully participating in LC meetings during the spring semester, serving as a resource for departmental colleagues, and submitting assessment data at the end of the project. Moreover, fellows will be invited to share their work with department, school/college, and university colleagues at venues such as college meetings, CTEI Learn@Lunch workshops, or the annual Curriculum Festival.

Please address all of the following in your one joint application for the pair of faculty (two pages, maximum):

1. Background Information

Include your names, department, and the course numbers and titles for the courses that you teach in your department which will be the primary subject of your project. How many students do you anticipate will be impacted by these courses in the coming year, and each academic year thereafter? Please indicate if your courses include one of the six HIPs/WICs identified for your program, i.e. having a "P" or "W" designation.

2. Innovative Teaching Activities to Date

Briefly describe particularly innovative teaching activities in which you have been involved. This may include past efforts or events attended to improve your teaching and the subsequent changes made, development of new curricular materials, etc.

3. Your Course Problem or Curricular Question

What specific problem(s) do you see in your courses where students struggle to achieve program learning outcomes? And/or what issues and problems do you see across the full major curriculum in student achievement of program outcomes? In answering these questions, it can be helpful to review both your program's annual student learning outcome assessment data and latest ELO assessment data.

4. Your Goals for Students in your Course/Program

What are some preliminary thoughts or plans you have in mind for improving student outcomes in your course or major? [**Note:** These are subject to change as faculty participate in the workshop and monthly meetings.]

5. Signatures

Please have your department Chair and Dean indicate support of your application by signing your proposal, or attaching an email of support.

Applications are due via email to Angel McNiel (mcniel@hartford.edu) by Monday, November 15, 2021.

Thank you!

Jim Shattuck and **Lisa Zawilinski**